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1898.

Weighty Words

FROM THE

WRITINGS OF J. N. D.

John Nelson Darby

VOLUME I.

LONDON:
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WEIGHTY WORDS.

OBEDIENCE.

Practical I.

There is nothing so humble, nothing so steady, as *obedience.* Page 3

In all cases, and under all circumstances, gifts or no gifts, *obedience* is the path of the Christian—the path of duty and blessing. 4

Obedience is the only rightful state of the creature, or God would cease to be supreme—would cease to be God. 4

The only rightful position of the creature is *obedience;* upon this hangs all the order of creation—on this hang sin and righteousness. (1 John iii. 4.) The definition of sin is lawlessness, doing one's own will. "He that doeth the will of God, abideth for ever." (1 John ii. 17.) 4, 5

This was the critical point of the first Adam's standing and blessing: "Thou shalt not eat." (Gen. ii. 17.) He did eat and was ruined. 5

Precisely the opposite was found in the blessed and perfect Saviour—"I delight to

do thy will, O my God." (Psa. xl. 8.) "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." (John iv. 34.) 5

Obedience was the principle on which He acted in temptation. "It is written" (Matt. iv. 4) was His reply. 6

"The object of *obedience* ~~may~~ is be in question, are but self-will is always wrong!" Darby Obed. 8

Obedience can be swerved from in no instance without breaking through the first and only principle of accepted relationship to God; it is the only exercise, save praise, of life to God.

Self-will is never right. "Yet desirable by Darby *Obedience* to man is often wrong—*disobedience* to God. 9

The gift of knowledge is founded on the spirit of *obedience;* for what does it avail to confer gift on the *disobedient*, unless God should provide for His own dishonour? 14

The man is become as one of us, to know good and evil. But oh! what a store of accompanying evils and ruin come in upon the act of *disobedience* founded on this devil-used truth. 16

Of the principles of it (*obedience*) we have an illustrious instance in Samson and his history. (Judg. xvi. 17.) There might have seemed little connection between long or uncut

hair and all-overcoming strength: but God was in it; and an *obeyed*, honoured God is a God of strength to us. 19

The order of God to Christians is, not *obedience* upon blessing, but blessing on *obedience*: not to wait for blessing in order to *obey*, but to act on the command, and the blessing follows. *And this is faith.* There would be no faith if the blessing came first. 22

On the whole, the scripture is plain, as the principle is uniform—that *obedience* is the way of blessing; and that we are not to wait for power to *obey* a command but to *obey* it that we may find power. (Matt. xii. 13.) The Lord did not restore the hand that he might stretch it out and shew it, but ordered the man to stretch it out that it might be restored. And this is true in all possible cases. 23

The operation of the Spirit is to make us *obey*. There is no owning the Spirit but in *obedience*: and all our efforts are so far profitable as they are within *obedience*. God's prescribed order; and all that without is the energy of our own will, and is evil. 25, 26

To lean upon tradition is to prove that *we have not* His commandments. 26

HOW TO KNOW THE WILL OF THE FATHER.

"If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." (Matt. vi. 22.) People would like a convenient and comfortable means of knowing *God's will*, as one might get a receipt for anything; but there exists no means of ascertaining it without reference to the state of our own soul. 28

Moreover, we are often of too much importance in our own eyes; and we deceive ourselves in supposing some *will of God* in such or such a case. God perhaps has nothing to tell us thereon, the evil being altogether in the stir we give ourselves. The *will of God* is perhaps that we should take quietly an insignificant place. 28, 29

Further, we sometimes seek *God's will*, desiring to know how to act in circumstances *in which it is not His will that we should be found at all.* 29

Be assured that if we are near enough to God, we shall have no trouble to *know His will.* In a long and active life it may often happen that God, in His love, may not always at once reveal *His will* to us, that we may feel our dependence, particularly where the individual has a tendency to act according to *his own will.* 29

It is then the *will of God*, and a *precious will*, that we should be able to discern it only according to our own spiritual state. In general, when we think we are judging circumstances, it is God who is judging us—who is judging our state. Our business is to keep close to Him. God would not be good to us, if He permitted us to discover *His will* without that. It might be convenient just to have a director of consciences; and we should be thus spared the discovery and chastisement of our moral condition. Thus, if you seek how you may discover the *will of God*, without that, you are *seeking evil*. It is what we see every day. 30

One Christian is in doubt, in perplexity; another, more spiritual, sees as clear as the day, and he is surprised, sees no difficulty, and ends by understanding that it lies only in the other's state of soul. 30, 31

As regards circumstances, I believe a person may be guided by them; scripture has decided that. It is what is meant by being held in with "bit and bridle" (Psa. xxxii. 9), whereas the promise and privilege of him who has faith is, "*I will* instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: *I will* guide thee with mine eye." (Psa. xxxii. 8) He warns us not to be as the horse and mule which have no understanding of the *will, thoughts, desires* of their master. It is needful to hold *them in* with bit and bridle. Doubtl[illegible]

that is better than to stumble and fall, and strike against Him who reins us in ; but it is a sad state, and such is it to be guided by circumstances. 31

Here however, there must be a distinction drawn between judging what one *has to do in* certain circumstances, and being guided by them. He who allows himself to be guided by them always acts in the dark as to knowing the *will of God.* There is absolutely nothing moral in it, but an exterior force drags along. Now, it is very possible that I may have no judgment beforehand of what I shall do: I know not what circumstances may arise, and consequently I can take no side. But the instant the circumstances are there, I judge with a full and divine conviction what is the path of *God's will.* That demands the highest degree of spirituality.

31, 32

As to impressions, God can suggest them, and it is certain that He does in fact suggest a thing to the mind ; but in that case, the propriety of the thing and its moral character, will be as clear as the sun at noonday. In prayer God can remove from our heart certain carnal influences, which, being destroyed, leave room to certain other spiritual influences to take their place in the soul. 32

One person may not have enough spiritual discernment to discover what is good : but the moment another shews it to him, he understands *that it is* the truth. All are not good engineers,

ɔut a simple waggoner knows a good road when t is made. 32

Again, the case should never exist of a ɔerson acting without knowing the *will of God.* The only rule that can be given is, never to act vhen we do not know what is the *Lord's will.* 33

If I do something with the full certainty that I am doing the *will of God,* it is clear that an ɔbstacle is no more than a trial of my faith: ınd it ought not to stop me. 33

God never permits Satan to act otherwise than on the flesh. 33

The rule that we should do what Jesus would have done in such and such a circumstance is excellent, *where and when it can be applied.* But are we often in the circumstances wherein the Lord was found? 34

It is often useful to ask myself *whence* comes such a desire of mine? I have found that this alone decides more than half the embarrassments that Christians meet with. The two-thirds of those which remain are the result of our own haste and of our former sins. 34

"I WILL GUIDE THEE WITH MINE EYE."

(PSA. XXXII. 8, 9.)

When there is anything in which the will

of man is at work, the Lord deals with u as with the horse or mule, holding us in. Whe every part of the heart is in contact with Hin self, He guides with "*His eye.*" 39

Suppose I set about doing a thing, and me with difficulties, I shall begin to be uncertain a to whether it is God's mind or not: and hen there will be feebleness and discouragemen But, on the other hand, if acting in the intel gence of God's mind, in communion, I shall b "more than conqueror" (Rom. viii. 37), wha ever may meet me by the way. 40

Your wills being subject to Mine, He says, " *will guide thee with mine eye.*" (Psa. xxxii. 8 41, 42

If I have spiritual understanding about given thing, it may be the result of a great de of previous prayer, and not necessarily of th things having been prayed about at the time. Or has often had to pray about a thing because not a *communion.* 43

I may have my mind exercised about th to-day, honestly, truly, graciously exercise which, five years hence it might be, I shou not have a doubt about. 43

Many speak of Providence as a *guide.* Prov dence does sometimes control, but it neve properly speaking, *guides us*—it *guides things* 44

THE SPIRIT NOT OF FEAR BUT POWER.

(2 TIM. I. 3–8.)

We are not to expect never to be exercised, or troubled, or cast down, as though we were without feeling.

"They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." (Psa. lxix. 21.) He thoroughly felt it all—the iron entered into His soul. "Reproach," He says, "hath broken my heart." (Psa. lxix. 20.) 46

Paul had a "thorn in the flesh" (2 Cor. xii. 7); and did he not feel it, think you? Ay, he felt it daily; and as "the messenger of Satan to buffet him." (2 Cor. xii. 7.) 48

And what did he say? "Most gladly, therefore, will I glory in my infirmities, that the *power* of Christ may rest upon me." The *power* of God coming in our side does not lessen the feeling to us. 48

FAITH FURNISHED FOR THE EVIL DAY.

(EPH. VI. 10–24.)

The very blessings of the church set us in a sort of conflict, that, without such blessings, we should not have. Thus we are subject to more of failure *and evil.* A Jew might do many

things that would be monstrous in a Christian, and find no defilement of conscience. 50

If you and I have more knowledge than many other Christians, there will be more dishonour and failure amongst us, than amongst other Christians, unless we walk according to the light. 51

What we call "duties," but what God calls "cares," often separate us from Christ. (Mark iv. 19.) 51

The reason why a saint who has a great deal of joy often gets into failure is because it has taken him away from the present consciousness of dependence; the very goodness of the Lord has made him enjoy himself. There is always a tendency for the flesh to slip in. 53

Conscious weakness causes a saint not to dare to move without God. 53

We have to stand against the wiles of the devil (it is not said his power). As soon as I can see them I can avoid them. To discern his "wiles" we should see whether the thing proposed leads from obedience to Christ. (Eph. vi. 11.) 56

This is a remarkable expression, "*the evil day.*" (Ver. 13.) It supposes in a general way all this present time, for it is the time of Satan's temptations. 56

"Stand, therefore, having your loins girt

about with truth." (Eph. vi. 14.) Truth is never really ours, but as the affections are kept in order by it. 58

"And having on the breastplate of righteousness." (Eph. vi. 14.) A person not having a clean conscience Satan cows in his walk. 58

There is no place so full of peace as heaven —no jar there; myriads of worshippers all in concord, while there are a thousand harmonies round the centre of God's glory. 59

The soul in communion with God will live in the spirit of peace. There is nothing more important, to meet the turmoil of the world, than getting into this spirit of peace.

Nothing keeps the soul in such peace as a settled confidence in God. Without this a man will be continually excited, in haste, and full of anxiety. 59

There is nothing more dangerous than to use the word when it has not touched my conscience. I put myself into Satan's hands if I go beyond what I have from God, what is in possession of my soul, and use it in ministry or privately. 60

There is nothing more dangerous than the handling of the word apart from the guidance of the Spirit. To talk with saints on the things of God beyond what I hold in communion is most pernicious. There would be a great deal

not said, that is said, were we watchful as to this, and the word not so used in an unclean way. I know of nothing that more separates from God than truth spoken out of communion with God; there is uncommon danger in it. 60

When living really in the power of communion, we have that energy of supplication that looks for answer. 61

Humbleness and dependence should be marked on all a saint's actions. 61

THOUGHTS ON THE EXPERIENCE OF ABRAHAM AND OF JACOB.

The *experiences* of the heart occupy a large place in the thoughts of Christians. It is nevertheless important always to judge them by the word of God. 62

It is not necessary here to speak of the *experiences* of an unconverted person, although such an one is nevertheless not without *experiences*. It is true that he does not know God, but, in a certain sense, he enjoys His goodness in nature; his conscience can blame him, he can be weary of sin, and alarmed at the thought of judgment. He can forget the latter in the enjoyment of his family and society in a life naturally amiable; but he can do no more. 63

There is a great variety in the *experience* of men in whom the Spirit of God is working. This difference arises, on the one hand, from the relation in which we stand to God, and on the other, from our conduct in the same relations. 63

I am under law as long as I make my acceptance *with* God to depend on my faithfulness *to* God, that is, on the fulfilment of my duties. 64

As long as the awakened soul remains under the law, it has sad *experiences*, it feels that it is guilty according to the law, and that it has no power to keep it. 64

The flesh has no relations with God ; and the flesh is ever in us. 66

The *experiences* of a soul that walks with God are far more simple than the *experiences* of an unfaithful soul ; and, nevertheless, the knowledge of God and of the heart of man will be far deeper in the former case. 67

Abraham himself failed in faith on some occasions ; but, in general, his life was a walk of faith with God. This is the reason why his *experiences* are of another nature, far more intimate with God, and more simple, than those of Jacob. His history is short, not rich in incidents ; while the communications of God to this patriarch are numerous and frequent. In his

history there is much about God and little about man. 69

Lot is the type of a worldly believer. 71

Lot, the worldly believer, is overcome by the princes of the world. 71

It was necessary that Abraham should again *experience*, in the case of Ishmael, that the law produces sadness and anguish; and at the court of Abimelech he learnt to know, that when unbelief is in action, it only produces troubles and anguish. 72

The variety of his (Jacob's) *experience* is a proof of unfaithfulness. 74

One does not get rid of the difficulties of the path of faith by trying to avoid them; one must surmount them by the power of God. 75

No possible *experiences* can ever have the effect which the experience of God produces on a soul. Such *experiences* are useful to humble us, they are a means of stripping us of ourselves. 79

Jacob is a warning to us; but Abraham is an example. 80

The *experiences* of Jacob are the *experiences* of what the hearts of men are. The *experiences* of Abraham are the *experiences* of the heart of God. 81

May God give us grace to dwell near Him,

to walk with Him, that our *experiences* may have for their end the growing knowledge of His love and of His nature. (Col. iii. 9–12.)
82

THE FAILURE OF THE SONS OF AARON.

(LEV. X.)

We trace all through the scriptures the record of the *failure* of man. In every circumstance wherein he has been set, man has *failed.* And yet all this *failure* is seen but in the end to redound to the glory of God—to the praise of His grace. (Lev. x.) 84

Failure is ever the character of the ways of man ; and the chapter before us presents it in most striking as well as touching circumstances.
84

The "Sons of Aaron" were set in the place of grace, and there in the place of grace they *failed.* 84

The offering of Cain (as of every natural man) is the witness of the most perfect insensibility of heart as to what he was before God. All that we can offer of our natural hearts is "the sacrifice of fools." 86

The Lord Jesus Christ turns everything He touches into blessing. 86

THE ALTAR OF ABRAHAM.

(GEN. XI. 27; XII. 1–7.)

Independence of God is the desire of all men. 103

Christ gave not Himself by halves. 107

He (Abraham) went out "*not knowing whither he went.*" There is that which characterises his faith. 111

Abraham, stranger-like, goes here and there. He pitches his tent and builds an altar. It is all he has in the land. Happy and quiet, he rests in the promise of God. And this also is what we ourselves have to do. 113, 114

Perhaps it will happen to us, as to Abraham, to buy a *sepulchre* and that is all. (Gen. xxiii.) 114

God cannot be satisfied with a half obedience: but, having walked in what God says, we may rest in His love and have His altar until He come in whom are all the promises. 114

THE SUFFERINGS AND PRAISES OF CHRIST.

(PSA. XXII.)

It is a solemn thought that whatever man has touched he has corrupted. Creation

groans when a man has been there. But if I look where a man cannot reach, at the moon, the stars, &c., all is glorious. The "heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." (Psa. xix. 1.) 115

Psalm xxii. is Christ forsaken of God. Not that He is not despised of the people: there "Strong bulls of Bashan beset him round." "Dogs compassed him." "The assembly of the wicked enclosed him;" but all this, felt as none but Christ could feel, what was it in presence of the awful reality of *Christ suffering from the hand of God—of Christ suffering* for sin?

117

It baffles thought, that most solemn lonely hour which stands aloof from all before or after. How does not the perfectness of Christ shine in it. 118

In Christ nothing was brought out but what was perfect. 119

There is not a vanity we have not preferred to Him. 119

Never had the divine complacency in Christ been so complete as on the cross, never was God so glorified as in Him there. 121

He (*Christ*) *could suffer alone*, but that finished, could *He praise* alone? No, "In the midst of the congregation will I *sing praise* unto thee." (Psa. xxii. 22.) 122

The cause of his fall was self-confidence; the flesh was actively present. 132

It is the same with us. We often commit faults which are irreparable, from too much confidence in the flesh. 133

Perfect as was the pardon of Peter he could never forget his sin. 134

His (Peter's) conscience had been so fully purified that he could accuse the Jews of the very sin he had himself committed under the most solemn circumstances. "Ye denied the Holy One and the Just" were his words. (Acts iii. 14.) 134

Jesus had foretold his failure; and here He asked him, "Lovest thou me more than these." (John xxi. 15.) Peter can say nothing save that he had learnt his weakness, and that he had loved Jesus less than the other disciples. 135

The flesh has a certain confidence in the flesh, and this is often the folly into which we fall. 136

If a Christian does not walk under a constant sense of his infirmity, God leaves him in the presence of Satan, that he may there be taught it. It is then also he commits acts which are often irreparable; and it is this which is the most sorrowful part of all. 136

Jacob halted all his life. Why was this? It

was because he had halted, morally, during one and twenty years. 136

THE LAST WORDS OF DAVID.

(2 SAM. xxii., xxiii. 1–7.)

There is a remarkable contrast between the two songs in these chapters, the song of David after he had done with all his enemies (that is, after his trials by Saul) and the song of David after he had done with himself; here brought together by the Spirit of God. 139

At the end of his trials, when looking back at his enemies, he sings songs of triumph; all is exaltation. After his experience of the blessing, it is, "Although my house be not so with God.' (2 Sam. xxiii. 5.) The end of all the sorrow and trial with Saul is rejoicing, exaltation and strength, while in the second, the result of the place of honour, blessing and triumph, is deep and bitter sorrow—the confession, "My house is not so with God." 139

This contrast makes trouble precious, and is a check to any desire to get out of it. 140

So practically it is with us, we need to guard against the effects of success; the pressure of circumstances which keep me down produces nothing but joy and praise, in the experience of

God's goodness; the effect of circumstances which lift me up is sorrow. 140

How often has a saint, when in trial and conscious weakness, cast therein upon the Lord, cried unto Him, and as a faithful servant been sustained, had blessing, and acquired influence, godly influence too; but how often, satisfied with blessing and the influence thus acquired and losing the sense of his weakness, has he stopped suddenly short in his course, been arrested in the point of influence obtained, and become comparatively useless in the church of God. 140

There is perhaps nothing of deeper interest than to see how God takes up the history of David in the psalms, writing as it were upon David's heart the history of the Lord Jesus. In chapter xxiii. we get "*the last words of* David." (2 Sam. xxiii. 1.) 141

Faith realises the strength of God without reckoning on self, and so does that which comes in the way, without thinking about it. 143

Whether it be the lion or the bear, or the uncircumcised Philistine, it is the same thing. 145

And now we come to a sad picture; we see a different line of conduct in David. 149

We find in him now the want of that direct reference to Jehovah which had so marked his previous course, he trusts in his own strength,

ves in self indulgence, and then falls into gross n. 149.

The end of all this is the word of Jehovah y the prophet, that the sword should never epart from his house, David is chastened, epentance given, and the sin put away; but e sword departs not from his house. 149

David was blessed as much when king, hilst humble, as when an outcast he was unted by Saul, like a partridge in the mountains. 150

In these "*last words of David*," as we have een, there is deep consciousness of failure and uin. "My house is not so with God." (2 Sam. xiii. 1, 5.) 150

If we are faithful in the singleness of eye in he camp of Saul, we shall soon find ourselves the cave of Adullam, taking as the portion of ur souls, fellowship in Christ's sufferings. It is ere we shall have all the unfoldings of those ternal affections, those secret affections of eart, which were in David when humble. 156

THE HEART OF CHRIST ABOUT HIS OWN, POURED FORTH INTO THE HEART OF THE FATHER.

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF A DISCOURSE ON JOHN XVII.

There is *no* chapter in the Bible which

traces more as a whole the position of a Christian, and what Christ is for him. 157

There is something very special in the chapter. It is the only one which admits us to these wondrous conversations. It relates to us, not only what the Lord says to men, but what *He says to His Father*, while we hearken to Him. It is not trust merely, but confidence. We are hearkening to Jesus, who is *giving an account of all to the Father.* 158

"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." (John xvii. 4.) He gives the account of all. *He pours forth His heart about His own into the heart of the Father.* It is the most intimate relation in which one could be; and wherein He has placed us. 159

We see that He always speaks in complete humiliation. (John xvii. 1, 2.) 160

If through grace we can say, I know the Father and the Son, we may say, I have life eternal and what a happiness that the thing is so simply said. 162

A soul may say to itself, I have not eternal life, for I do not glorify God. Dear friends, lay yourself a little aside: it is *the Son who speaks to the Father*, and it does not become you to place yourself between Them with your wretched *thoughts.* 162

God could not *rest* in man; but He could *rest* in Jesus. 162

It is most interesting to observe how the Son, though God equal with the Father, and having right to the glory, asks it, because as man He is worthy of it. 163

He will take the world for His inheritance: but the world now is neither His place nor ours. 165

He appeals to righteousness against the world; the world has not known the Father, although He was fully manifested in the flesh. 165

God could no longer love this world, where His Son had been dishonoured and condemned. 166

Thus He describes these persons, "Thine they were," and "They have kept thy word." (John xvii. 6.) There is much consolation in considering this word of Jesus. Their walk, the details of their connection with Jesus were most sorrowful; but they had (except Judas) persevered, in weakness perhaps, yet they had persevered. 166

When one day, Jesus asked them, "Will ye also go away?" Peter answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go?" (John vi. 68.) 166

The eye of God sees the smallest spark of

grace. He blows on it and makes it become resplendent. 167

They might have said, we have not kept Thy word as we ought to have done; but what they had kept was precious in the sight of Jesus and of God. Jesus always speaks according to the principle that is there. 167

All the words that Jesus received from the Father; all the plans and secret counsels of the Father, whereof Jesus as man has received the communication; all the testimonies of the favour and ways of God which comforted His soul—these all He has communicated to us. 168

It is His will that we should have the same communion of thoughts with the Father, that we should have part intelligently in all His love and all His grace. 168

Jesus was the depositary of the outpouring of the Father's heart, and that is the place that He has willed that we should have. 169

To whatever degree we enjoy the position of Jesus in heaven, we must also share His position here below, to be hated; it is the practical position of the Christian. 169

He could speak *peace* in the forgiveness of sins: but this *peace—His peace* was not before given to the disciples. Peace shuts out trouble. (John xiv. 27.) 198

This *peace* is the possession of such quiet as to be undisturbed about other things. It is *peace* with God in sight of His righteousness and His holiness. And it is an absorbing thing. 198

The soul, so satisfied with its own *peace*, desires nothing else. It knows God and finds nothing to disturb it in God or out of God. 199

Mark the extent of the *peace*, "*My peace*," and how thoroughly well He knew what He had that He could give it them. 199

He had been tried, rejected, suffered, "He had not where to lay his head." (Matt. viii. 20.) "Hunted like a partridge upon the mountains." (1 Sam. xxvi. 20.) "The man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isa. liii. 3); and yet He knew so well the blessedness He had that He could speak of it to leave it to them. 199

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect *peace* whose mind is stayed on thee" (Isa. xxvi. 3) was known experimentally by Him. 199

If the Lord came this moment would you have peace, would you be able to say, "This is our God, we have waited for him"? (Isa. xxv. 9.) 200

Even if you have found *peace* of conscience about your sins, through the blood of the cross, it will destroy your communion and *peace* of heart, if you like anything God does not like. 200

If there is anything not given up in the will there cannot be *peace*, if you have *peace*, then if God came in your *peace* would stay. 200

Peace is never imperfect, there can be no flaw in it, if anything comes in and produces an uncertainty it cannot be *peace*. 200

How can we have *peace*? Because He has made it "by the blood of his cross." (Col. i. 20.) 200

Peace is made, *peace* is given, *peace* is known by "the blood of his cross." (Col. i. 20.)

Is it a thought of mine about getting this "*peace*"? No. He says, "My *peace* I leave with you." 201

Have I earned it? No; He has earned it. 201

Christ would rather give up His life than God's favour for us. 201

THE FULNESS OF SCRIPTURE.

(From the *Christian Witness*, Vol. I., p. 47, not included in the "Collected Writings.")

THERE is so much instruction in the scripture that I find it impossible, in giving a few hints on any portion of the text of it, to attempt to bring out the breadth and length of its various applications. Indeed, as flowing from God, and bearing continually the impress of the fulness of His character, I constantly find, in opening, under God's mercy, any particular passage at different times and under different circumstances, that it presents itself in bearings so entirely different, that, although not in reality inconsistent, they could not be thought, by one untaught of God, to be drawn from the same passage.

It is this which so strongly marks and contrasts the word of God with any human writings. While these are the expressions of a judgment formed on results, or the imperfect discussion of unascertained thought, the writing of God is the expression of the full perfectness of the divine mind, bearing upon that which diversified it (while in itself intrinsically the same), according to the infinitely various reflection of that on which it expresses itself. This was true intrinsically in Christ, in whom dwelt all the fulness, and the scriptures are the divine expression of that fulness.

communion with God. That with which we should be occupied, is not the circumstances, but what God intends by them.

The heart of man naturally seeks *rest*, and seeks it here. Now, there is no *rest* to be found here for the saint; but it is written, "there remaineth therefore a *rest* to the people of God.'

To know this is both full of blessing and full of sorrow: sorrow to the flesh, because it is always seeking its *rest* here—it has always to be disappointed—blessing to the spirit, because the spirit, being born of God, can only *rest* in God's own *rest*, as it is said, "If they shall enter into my *rest*." God cannot *rest* in the corruption of sin. He can only *rest* in that which is perfectly holy. And because He who thus *rests* is love and loves us, He makes us understand that He will bring us into His own *rest*, into His own delight.

Now let the soul once know what the *rest* of God is, let the heart be once set upon it, there will be joy unspeakable in understanding, that God's love can *rest* in nothing short of bringing us into His own delight. There will then also be the full settled consciousness, that we cannot find *rest* elsewhere.

There are indeed joys by the way, but the moment we *rest* in them, they become, as the quails of Israel (Num. xi.), poison.

Whenever the soul loses practically the *knowledge* that its *rest* is in God's *rest*, the

moment the eye is off that which "remaineth," we begin to seek *rest* here, and consequently get uneasy, *restless*, and dissatisfied.

God loves us too well to let us *rest* here.

Are you content, to have or seek your *rest* nowhere save in God's *rest?*

What is the secret of unhappiness and *restlessness* of many a saint? a hankering after *rest* here.

Circumstances would not trouble, if they did not find something in us contrary to God; they would rustle by as the wind.

His discipline is the continual and unwearied exercise of love, which *rests* not now, in order that we may enter into His *rest.* If He destroys our *rest* here, if He turns our meat into poison, it is only that He may bring us into His own *rest*, that we may have that which satisfies His desires, not ours. "He will *rest* in his love." (Zeph. iii. 17.)

This is not a question about justification or *rest* of conscience as to judgment: that is all settled. "By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." (Heb. x. 14.) There we *rest*, and there God *rests.* The believer has already and altogether come to *rest* on Christ's work, as to that. He has peace through the blood of Christ.

The exhortations:—"Let us therefore fear," "Let us labour therefore" (Heb. iv. 1, 11), are plainly inconsistent with a state of *rest*. God

never ceases to warn in order that there may be the exercise of responsibility towards Himself, while we are on our way to the *rest*.

This "fear," and this "labour" begin when that question (justification) is settled, and settled for ever.

An unconverted man has, properly speaking, no dread of Satan; but, if not quite hardened, he has great dread of God. The saint of God has no fear (that is, dread) of God, whilst he has great fear of Satan.

It is not then from any uncertainty about God's love; but from the certainty of being in the desert, that we are to "fear" and to "labour." (Heb. iv. 1, 11.)

Redemption from Egypt brings us into the desert. If we have not God there, we have nothing. There is nothing in this wide world, or of it, which can refresh the new man, any more than there is in heaven to satisfy the old.

Everything proves to us that our *rest* is not here. Fearing, because I am in the desert with a heart prone to depart from God, is not *rest*. Having to conflict with Satan is not *rest*. Labour is not *rest*. "There remaineth therefore a *rest* to the people of God."

When we are poor in Spirit, and are labouring to enter into God's *rest*, there is a reality to be found in the riches which are in Christ Jesus, that many a saint has no conception of.

We have a sphere in which the divine life communicated to us can exercise its own faculties, and find its own resources. The church has its own joys, its own interests, its own treasures, its own sphere of life, its own field for affections, its own topics, its own world.

It is not *rest* to be searched and tried. *Rest*, blessed be God, is not our portion here. His holiness will not let us *rest* where there is sin; His love will not let us *rest* where there is sorrow. "There remaineth a *rest*," &c. for us. (Heb. iv. 9.) His own *rest*—God's *rest*. There will be neither sin, nor trouble, nor sorrow, in God's *rest*. There will be Himself there. And we shall *rest* in Him.

Oh, let us not be satisfied with small portions of blessing—low measures, low enjoyments.

THE CALL OF THE BRIDE.

(GEN. XXIV.)

PAGES 185–197.

In this chapter Abraham sends Eliezer to seek a wife for Isaac. This represents the Holy Spirit sent by the Father to seek the church, "The *bride*, the Lamb's wife." (Rev. xxi. 9.) It is not Isaac who goes to look for a *bride*. No more does Christ return to this earth to choose a church for Himself. Rebekah must leave her country and come to the land of promise.

The first thing that is presented to us here is Eliezer, who has the superintendence of all the goods of his master. He is not the heir—the son is the heir. Thus the Holy Spirit has the disposal of all things. He takes of the things of Christ and shews them to us, that is, to the church.

"And the man wondering at her held his peace." (Gen. xxiv. 21.) Why any doubt? Why does the servant hesitate, since his request has obtained such an answer? Here is the reason. Whatever may be the apparent manifestation of the hand of God, there is a positive rule in the word to which the Christian must pay attention, and which he must not neglect, because of his weakness in discerning what is of God.

Faith looks to the power of God, but judges all by the word; for God must act according to His word; and the servant, being in communion with God, ought to act in this thought; and even when there may be signs, he should decide nothing until the will of God be clear according to His word. He must be able to say, "This is indeed *according to God.*"

Eliezer, taken up with his errand, does not accept the offer of food which is made him. He does what he has to do. One secret of the Christian's life, as soon as he knows God's will, is to do his work, to occupy himself with it, to let no delay interfere with it, even to satisfy *the* wants of the body.

Look at a man who is not decided; he consults this one, and that one, when it is a question how he is to act; and even, having some desire to do his own will, he will rather seek counsel of those who have not so much faith as himself. Paul took counsel of neither flesh nor blood.

If I inquire, what is the interest of Christ, the thing will be instantly decided.

Often the things which are most simply said produce the greatest effect. Peter said to the Jews, "You killed the Prince of Life." (Acts iii. 15.) This is what *you did*, and what *I have to tell you* on the part of God.

When God gives us this simplicity, which makes us occupy ourselves with things in the manner in which God sees them, we ought to speak to any one, according to the state he is in before God. If I feel that he is lost I tell him so simply; and the most simple addresses are the best, and the most blessed.

"Delay me not." (Gen. xxiv. 56.) He does not trouble himself about Laban's house, and he gives no consideration to his request; he does not stop on account of it. His love for his master makes him consider *his* orders before everything else.

It is in this generally that weakness is shewn. We spare the flesh and neglect what we owe to God: in reality, we are sparing ourselves through fear of *not* being agreeable to others.

I have seen men, who are faithful in what they have to say to others, blessed of God, when they speak with simplicity and without hesitation.

And they called Rebekah, and said unto her "Wilt thou go with this man?" And she said "I will go." (Chap. xxv. 58.) There is no hesitation here. So likewise, through the influence of the Holy Spirit, *the bride* says, "I will go." She makes up her mind instantly, in the most decided manner, and leaves all; "I *will go*," she says.

Now let us examine Rebekah's position: she had neither the house of Laban nor that of Isaac. It is the same with us. We have neither the earth, on which we are, nor heaven to which we are going.

Rebekah was going, like us, across the desert.

Eliezer, the faithful servant, took care to comfort her, and to speak to her of the precious things which are in the father's house; to repeat to her the greatness and power of the father, and that "He hath given all that he hath to the Son."

The Holy Ghost, likewise communicates to us all that there is in the Father's house for those who are *the bride* of Christ.

The Christian who is not spiritual, but rather worldly, has a sorrowful lot; he cannot be *happy* if seeking after the world.

What Rebekah first perceives is Isaac. The important business was to bring the *bride* to the *bridegroom.*

GOD'S DWELLING WITH MEN.

(REV. xxi. 1–8.)

PAGES 202–218.

The thought and counsel of God has been at all times to make *man* His dwelling-place.

"BEHOLD the tabernacle of God is with *men*, and he will *dwell* with them, and they shall be his people," &c. His *dwelling-place* is with *men.* It is no more an individual or national thing. Of course the wicked are put away; but God's *dwelling-place* is no longer with the Jews, but with *men.*

The thought of God was to be *with men, dwelling* and abiding with them. Christ *dwelt* here among *men*, but it was a short time, and now He is cast out.

He brought Israel into the land to *dwell* among *them*, and He did *dwell* among *them*, as we know, for the Shecinah just means a tabernacle or *dwelling-place* of glory.

We see not only the putting away of sin, but Christ entering into another scene; and now we see not only God *dwelling* with *man*, but *man* with God.

We are partakers of the death and resurrection of Christ. He is gone into heaven present-

ing His own blood. We are cleansed, and our bodies the temple of the Holy Ghost, and thus we become individually His *dwelling-place.*

It is true again of the church of God, as it is said: "In whom also ye are builded together for an *habitation* of God through the Spirit." (Eph. ii. 22.) Thus the church becomes the *habitation* of God.

The *tabernacle* of God will be with *men.* Not only He is *with them,* but there is the *tabernacle,* the church, and He dwells in it.

Let me ask you how you treat this divine Guest. I am now speaking reverentially of God's presence. How often do you think of it in the day, that your bodies are *temples* of the Holy Ghost.

The place we hold on earth by redemption is to be the *habitation* of God through the Spirit individually, and as the church of God.

The Lord give us to know by faith now that our bodies are the *temple* of the Holy Ghost; that we are not our own, but bought with a price.

DEAD AND RISEN WITH CHRIST.

(Col. iii.)

PAGES 219–236.

If you examine the writings of Paul with a little care, you will find this principle at the root of all his teaching—that we are *dead and risen with Christ.*

The great doctrine which lies at the root of all, is being *dead and risen with Him.*

The true condition of every believer, that which from the very starting-point this doctrine teaches, is the utter judgment of the old man; the sentence of death passed upon it, and condemnation altogether.

There is no recognition of the flesh, as to the allowance and acceptance of it. But when I have found out that the old man is simply this evil thing, then I discover it is a question of putting it off and putting on something else. It is not a correction of the old nature, but having done with it and having something else instead of it, I put off the one, and put on the other. It is a figure, of course, but the figure of what is most real to faith.

Christ has *died* for us, but we can also say that we have *died* with *Him.* How it cuts at the root of everything that flesh seeks! What can a dead man seek? We are to reckon ourselves dead—not to reason that we must die, which will not give us power; but we are to reckon ourselves dead.

Supposing a person comes to tempt me:—how can he tempt a *dead* man? He tells me to come and amuse myself in something. But I say, I am *dead;* and the reason I can say so, is that my *life* is another kind of *life* altogether.

The old stock may spring up and shew itself sometimes; but I learn to treat the old life as

not the tree at all. We may fail to do this, and then it will produce the old bad fruit; but inasmuch as *Christ* is my *life*, I am but a grafted tree; I have a right to take that which I am grafted into as the real tree, and have nothing to do with anything else.

The old man, the flesh, is a judged, condemned thing; it is the second Man, the Lord from heaven, who is the spring of everything which is good and blessed.

Now mark one thing very distinctly of this *life*. If *Christ* is my *life*, in that sense Christ and heavenly things become the object of my *life*.

It is God's supreme prerogative not to want an object. He may love an object. But I cannot live without an object any more than without food. This life has an object. The law wanted this; it gave no object.

You may ask the flesh to die, but it never will. The old man will take good care not to die. But being alive *in Christ* I have the privilege and title to treat the other nature, the old one, as *dead*, because *He died*.

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth," &c. (Col. iii. 5.) And if I look at these members on earth, what are they? Gross sins. All these members upon the earth are lusts.

What the Christian sees now in heaven is what he is to be practically.—it is Christ.

But am I to be a sacrifice to God? Certainly.

"Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Wherever the power of divine life comes down and takes possession of a man, it manifests itself in his giving himself up to God.

Looked at as the object, it is *Christ* and nothing else for one that is *dead* and risen with Him, be he who he may. What do I want? *Christ.* What am I to follow? *Christ.* What is the object my heart has to think of? *Christ.*

If I am perfectly happy in God, I do not mind if a person insults me; but take it patiently. I am perfectly happy, and have got my soul in the place of these blessed affections.

There are constant difficulties that I find in passing through the world.

"Whatsoever ye do in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." (Col. iii. 17.) This will settle 999 cases out of 1000. If you are questioning whether you shall do a thing or not, just ask yourself, Am I going to do it in the name of the Lord Jesus? It will settle it at once.

Thus if a person says, What harm is there in my doing such and such a thing? I ask, Are you going to do it in the name of the Lord Jesus? Perhaps it may be something of which you will answer at once, Of course not. Then it is settled at once.

You will find many a true Christian, who has *Christ* as his *life,* and nothing to reproach him

with as to his walk, and yet has no spirituality whatever. If you talk to him about Christ there is nothing that answers. There is between the *life* that is at the bottom and the blamelessness that is at the top, between him and *Christ*, a whole host of affections and objects that are not *Christ* at all.

THE CHRISTIAN'S NATURE AND RELATIONSHIP TO GOD.

(EPH. I.)

PAGES 237–245

There are two ways in which we may look at our *relationship* to God; and rightly. There is, first, our coming to Him; secondly, our souls may look at the counsels, and dealings of God toward us.

As to my state before God, I could not draw near, unless I could bring Christ as an offering. We must have that sacrifice in order to bring us near. Consequently in that case our *relationship* to God, is measured by our need.

We must come in by our need, as the prodigal did. Man cannot by searching find out God. There cannot be any knowledge of God in grace by man being competent to know it. There would be no need of grace if he could know God otherwise.

But when I have got to God, it is another thing. Then He would form our minds and hearts by what He is Himself.

It is wonderful to have the same thoughts, the same feelings, as God, and to have them together, all flowing from Him. And we are brought into it by grace, and we enjoy it just so far as we are emptied of self.

First He makes us partakers of the *divine nature*, the *same nature* as *Himself*. This gives the capacity. I do not say power. The new nature is capacity, the Holy Ghost is power. The new *nature* is entirely dependent and obedient. The Holy Ghost being there gives me power.

In order to communion there must be perfect peace as regards the conscience.

All that Christ is, is for us to enjoy. How rich then the saint must be! But he is entirely dependent upon the Spirit of God for power. There is no power to enjoy anything without Him. There must be an emptying of self to enjoy what He gives. The Spirit of God has no place to act where self and imagination are in exercise.

There is more happiness in the fact of being in communion with Him, than in the things He communicates.

There is no measure of any *relationship* out of Christ: nothing but condemnation out of Christ.

The fact of the excellency of the person, without the possibility of being like Him, would make me miserable; and to have Him always before me would be all the worse. But in

heaven I shall be with Christ and see Him, without the possibility of being unlike Him. What divine inventiveness of love to make us happy—infinitely happy. What God is and does is infinite.

"Chosen in him before the foundation of the world." Thus we have the fact of His heart being set upon us in eternity.

The soul knows there is a personal love of God towards himself, and the heart delights in that. So with Christ. In Revelation ii. there is the white stone. He will give proof of personal delight.

Do not talk to me of what I have, but what Christ is and what Christ has.

God is going to take us to heaven to be happy with Christ there; but He makes us happy out of heaven first. It is a difficult thing, but He does.

GOD FOR US.

(Rom. viii. 31–39.)

PAGES 246–253

It is *Himself* that is *for you;* if so, no matter what is against you.

"If *God* be *for us*, who can be against us?" (Rom. viii. 31.) Not only nothing can escape Him, but He occupies Himself with everything that can concern us. He neglects nothing.

God has given us His Son, and I should like to know what He will not give after that. If

Ie gave His Son, glory comes in as a kind of atural consequence.

Life? He (Christ) went through it too. He ıad plenty of sorrow in it; and so much the nore sorrow we have, the better for us.

Life cannot separate me from Christ, "for to ive *is Christ.* Death? This cannot separate ne; yea, it will bring me to Him—"to die is ;ain." (Phil. i. 21.)

I find One who got me out of the grand lifficulty; He intercedes for me now. He does ıot repeat what He did at first, but a kind of :onfidence grows with every day's experience. find Him unchangeably the same.

They had to gather the manna, it is true; just ıs diligence is required by us in divine things. Next they crossed the Jordan, where conflicts ›egins, and then it is we find that the Lord :omes to Joshua as captain of the Lord's host.

Being brought to Him we can say, "Search ne, O God." (Psa. cxxxix. 23.) For He does earch, not that He should impute, but that He nay cleanse; and therefore we desire that He hould.

SANCTIFICATION.

VITHOUT WHICH THERE IS NO CHRISTIANITY.

PAGES 283–307

(1 Pet. i.) There is something very sweet in he certainty with which the apostle Peter

presents to us the truths contained in this epistle. There is neither hesitation nor uncertainty. The word speaks of things received, of a certainty for those to whom it is addressed. Their faith was tried but the thing was certain.

It is not the unregenerate heart that loves the Lord Jesus. One may be brave and all that, and think that if one's conduct is good, the result in heaven will be accordingly; but therein is no love for the Lord Jesus. And this is the badge of the Christian.

1 Peter i. 8. The apostle says in verse 8, "whom [Christ] not having seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Now, there is no such thing as this without the new birth, which is a new life, which has an object which pre-occupies it. It is an entirely new life, which has interests, affections, quite a new world; and without which there is no Christian, because there is not Christ.

Observe particularly this word "*sanctification*": the first idea is separation to God.

Here is what God has done: He has *separated* us to Himself, as a man who hews stones out of a quarry. The stone is hewed out of a quarry and *set apart*, destined to be cut and fashioned, in order to be placed in the appointed building. And God detaches a soul from *the quarry* of this world to *separate it* for Himself.

I say not but that there is much to do, for a ·ough stone cut out of the quarry requires often :onsiderable labour before it is placed in the ɔuilding for which it is destined.

Even so God *separates*, prepares, and fashions this soul to introduce it into His spiritual building. There are many useless matters to take off, but God acts every day in His grace. Howsoever, this soul is *sanctified*, set apart for God, from the moment it is taken out of the quarry of this world.

He takes us out of the quarry of this world to place us under the efficacy of the blood of Christ. The stone is entirely His and adapted to His purpose. Although He has yet to work upon it, the question is not of what He does each day, but generally of the *appropriation* to the end God has proposed to Himself. It is the Holy Spirit who acts in the soul and *appropriates* it to Himself.

It may previously have been very honourable ɔr very wicked in its conduct (that is of no noment here); only it will be more grateful, if t feels more evil; but as to its former condition, his matters little: it belongs now to God.

The aim of the life of a soul *sanctified*, or *set ;part*, is to do the will of God.

As soon as a soul is *sanctified*, it is *sanctified* into obedience.

As to the second thing, we are *sanctified* to

enjoy the sprinkling of the blood. The blood of the Son of God cleanses us from all sin; it is by the efficacy of His blood that we are *separated* from this world.

I would point out to you the meaning of the word "*sanctification;*" it is rarely used in the scriptures in the sense in which we generally use it, that is to say, in the progressive sense. It is only three times spoken of in this sense.

"Follow peace with all men, and *holiness (sanctification)* without which no man shall see the Lord." (Heb. xii. 14.) "The very God of peace *sanctify* you wholly." (1 Thess. v. 23.) I quote these two passages to shew that I do not set aside this sense of the word; but it more particularly designates an act of *separation*—a *setting apart* for God.

If we have not laid hold of this meaning, there will be an entire mistake as to what *sanctification* is.

In the two above-quoted passages, the word has an every-day application. In the sense in which it is used by the apostle, in the beginning of this epistle, it is perfectly in the sense of taking a stone out of the quarry of this world to fashion it to God.

Sanctification is attributed to the Father in more than one place in the Bible; see Heb. x. 10. Now it is by this will that we are *sanctified.*

The soul *separated* from the world is *sanctified*

›y that very fact. There is the old trunk which ›ushes forth its shoots; but God acts in pruning; .nd His acting, which takes place by the Holy ›pirit, works the daily practical *sanctification.*

The heart is each day more and more set ıpart. Thus, when life is communicated and hereby the man is *sanctified,* there is a daily work of *sanctification* which applies to the ıffections, to the habits, to the walk, &c.

The Spirit of Christ in me cannot be different from what was in Him; and it is evident that he who is *separated* from this world for God cannot find pleasure in the life of sin of this world, and prefer it to that of heaven.

There is nothing in common between the life of heaven and that of the world. It is not a question of prohibitions as to using this or that, but of having altogether other tastes, desires, oys; and it is, on that account, people imagine Christians are sad, as if they were absorbed y only one thought. It is that our joys are ltogether different from those of the world: ıe world knows not our joys.

No unrenewed person can comprehend what ›nders the Christian happy.

Is it for naught the gold is put into the ırnace, or because it is not gold? No; it is to urify it. God, by trials, takes out of our hearts ıat which is impure, in order that, when the lory arrives, we may enjoy it.

The magnet always turns towards the pole; the needle always trembles a little when the storm and tempest roar, but its direction changes not—the needle of the christian heart points always towards Christ.

The Word of God becomes the instrument of blessing and of practical *sanctification.*

This is practical *sanctification*: habits, affections and a walk formed after the life and calling one has received from God.

He places us in trial: He makes us pass through the furnace, because He will wholly purify us.

Let us examine the difference between our justification and our *sanctification.*

Justification is something, not in ourselves, but a position in which God has placed us before Himself.

God cannot give precepts of *sanctification* to such as have no justification.

The progress of practical *sanctification* must not be confounded with justification, because practical *sanctification* is wrought in a saved soul, that has eternal life.

Have you peace with God, the pardon of your sins? If not, the question is of the justification of a sinner.

He (God) does not speak to sinners of *sanctification.*

Does the Holy Spirit tell pagans to make ·ogress in *sanctification?* Does he say this › men unconverted? No.

The world was not Christ's aim. During Iis whole life, though He was not gone out of ıe world, He was no more of the world than if Ie was in heaven.

"*Sanctify them* by thy truth." (John xvii. 17.) For their sakes I *sanctify* myself." (John vii. 19.) What does the Lord Jesus here ɔr us? He sets Himself *apart.* He *sanctifies* Iimself. It is not that He may be more ıoly, but He makes Himself the model man.

"*Sanctify* them through thy word; thy word s truth." Is it not by looking into myself I ;hall find this *sanctification?* No; but by ooking to Jesus.

If any one seeks after *sanctification* without ɔeing assured of his justification, and is troubled ıbout it, doubting whether he be a Christian, hen I ask him, "What have you to do with *anctification?*" You have not to think about hat for the present. Assure yourself first of all ɔou are saved: pagans, unbelievers, do not *anctify* themselves. If you have faith, you are aved; *sanctify* yourself in peace.

It is faith which *sanctifies* as also it justifies: : looks unto Jesus.

THE
EARNEST OF THE INHERITAN(

(EPH. I.)

PAGES 310–3

This is the distinguishing character of fait realises, it possesses by the Spirit the "*ea* of the inheritance."

Those who dwell in spirit in the heav country take the tone of it, and grow in things wherein they find themselves.

His (God's) love needs other beings be Himself to render them happy. He will re others happy. He will have before beings who respond to what He is.

The Holy Spirit is the *earnest of ou heritance* until the redemption of the purch possession, to the praise of His glory. (i. 14.)

The Holy Spirit comes down upon Gentiles to put the "*seal*" upon men (i. 13), and to give the "*earnest*" (Eph. i of the things that we have not yet, tha possess not but by faith.

The Holy Spirit having been given us "*seal*," and dwelling in us, it may indeed ha that we fail in many respects by our foolish i gence, but we are in the position to enjoy

What is special is the Holy Spirit

us *seal* after we have believed, before the things themselves be accomplished.

Let us comprehend that the Holy Spirit has been given as the "*seal*," as the "*earnest*," of infinitely higher things.

CHRIST, THE FAITHFUL WITNESS.

(REV. i. 1–5.)

PAGES 325–334

Jesus is present under three characters. The Faithful Witness, the First Begotten of the dead, the Prince of the kings of the earth.

When it is said that He is "the *Faithful Witness*," the question is, not to say, I have not been the *faithful witness*, I ought to have been that; but rather to say, it is He that has washed us. I am entitled to think only of Jesus, only of what He has done for me; I am entitled to be set there.

It is because He has made us kings and priests that the subject of our praise is not equivocal. One may sing well or ill, high or low, according to the state of one's soul, but it is a song that ought to be sung without one discordant note.

Let us see whereon this is founded It is on Jesus Christ, who is the "*Faithful Witness*."

But we need a "*Faithful Witness*." We

see God in nature; that is true, but all this knowledge does not lead man to God.

Man has spoilt all. The traces of God, or the Architect, are there; but it is a ruin. All is defiled from His mind; all is in degradation. The ways of Providence are incomprehensible. A soul under chastening understands nothing. There is "one event to the righteous and to the wicked;" it is always an enigma for them until God judges. The certainty of what God is cannot be found in this inexplicable providence.

He is the "*Faithful Witness*" as regards our sins, and it is our happiness that He has not hidden them from us.

The certainty of salvation is a consequence which God reveals to me of the work of Christ. If God says to me, thou hast killed the Prince of life, by this very means I know that all my sins are washed out.

When God says, this is what I have done, I have washed out all thy sins by the sin thou hast committed in killing the Prince of life, faith alone can make me comprehend this. The heart torments itself while the thing is simple. It is to believe the *witness* that God has given of His Son. And this love which is boundless, this Jesus, who is the "*Faithful Witness*," Let us receive Him as such, and as the image of the living God, who is always love.

ECHO OF "SONGS IN THE NIGHT."*

(Written in Pau, 1879, when the thoughts of Hymns addressed to the Father were much present to Mr. Darby's mind.)

To live of Thee—blest Source of deepest joy!
  To hear, e'en now by faith, Thy voice of love,
Thou living spring of bliss without alloy,
  Bright inlet to the light of heaven above!

Come fill my soul! Thy light is ever pure,
  And brings from heaven what Thou alone canst give,
Yea, brings Thyself, the revelation sure
  Of heaven's eternal bliss. In Thee we live!

I hail Thee, Lord! Of Thee my song shall speak;
  Poor and unworthy strains, yet still of Thee:
Yes, fill my soul! 'Tis this my heart doth seek,
  To dwell in love, and God my dwelling be!

Thou'st made the Father known! Him have we seen
  In Thy blest Person; infinite delight!
Yes, it suffices: though we here but glean
  Some foretaste of His love, till all be light.

Oh! dwell with me; let no distracting thought
  Intrude to hide from me that heavenly light.
Be Thou my strength! Let not what Thou hast brought
  Be chased by idle nature's poor delight.

Father, Thou lov'st me! Favour all divine
  Rests on my soul; a cloudless favour. There
Thy face shines on me, as it still doth shine
  On Thy blest Son! His image I shall bear.

* It is a significant fact, acted on generally and admitted, that the hymns of the late beloved J. N. D. express more accurately and adequately than any others, the full position and privileges both of the individual saint and the church of God, and especially our fellowship with the Father and His Son, and all it involves.—[Ed.]

But now, e'en now, Thy love can fill my soul—
  That love that soars beyond all creature thought—
In spirit bring where endless praises roll,
  And fill my longing heart, till there I'm brought.

Thee will I hail, O Lord! in Whose blest Face
  God's glory shines unveil'd! Thee will I praise,
Whose love has brought me nigh, in righteous grace,
  And soon wilt come eternal songs to raise!

* * * *

And oh! how deep the peace! when nature gone,
  The spirit fills the soul, strengthened with might,
With love divine; and God, as love, is known!
  Lord! keep my soul, and guide my steps aright.

* * * *

Praise be ever His, who giveth songs by night!

REFLECTIONS ON MIXED MARRIAGES.

PAGES 255–265.

God can interfere in *judgment* to deliver H chosen from the sad spiritual consequences whic flow from a want of faithfulness.

Oh how difficult it is to stop when once w have set out in such a road!

God only knows, and the one who h suffered from it, by what subtle means, ar under what an amiable guise the world ofte invades the heart of the Christian.

Here we are in warfare with the enemy.

"*Ephraim* is joined to idols; let him alone

(Hos. iv. 17.) Terrible punishment! Harder than the most severe outward chastening!

He is tender and pitiful in His ways; but if we are determined to follow our own will, He knows how to break it.

Remark the government that God exercises with regard to His children. He warns them by His word, and if they do not listen, He interferes in His power to stop them in order that He may be able to bless them.

I do not doubt that a large part of the sickness and trials of Christians are chastenings sent by God on account of things that are evil in His sight; which the conscience ought to have paid heed to, but which it neglected.

It would, however, be untrue to suppose that all afflictions are chastenings. Though they are so sometimes, they are not always sent because of sin. There are things in the soul connected with the natural character, and which need to be corrected.

It is absolutely impossible that a Christian should allow himself *to marry* a worldly person, without violating all his obligations towards God and towards Christ.

If a child of God *allies himself* to an unbeliever, it is evident that he leaves Christ out of the question; and that he does so voluntarily in the most important event in his life.

It is just at such a moment that he ought to

have the most intimate communion of thought, and affection, and interest with Christ; and He is totally excluded!

The believer is yoked with an unbeliever. He has chosen to live without Christ; he has deliberately preferred to do his own will and to exclude Christ rather than give up his will.

He has given his heart to another, abandoning Christ and refusing to listen to Him. The more affection there is, the more the heart is attached, the more openly has something been preferred to Christ. What a fearful decision! to spend one's life thus, choosing for a companion an enemy of the Lord's. The influence of such a union is necessarily to draw the Christian back into the world.

He has already chosen to accept that which is of the world as the most beloved object of his heart; and only things of the world, please those who are of the world. (Rom vi. 21–23.)

What a dreadful position! Either to fail in faithfulness to Christ, or to have constantly to resist just where the tenderest affection ought to have established perfect unity.

The fact is, that unless the sovereign grace of God comes in, the Christian man or woman always yields and enters little by little upon a worldly walk. Nothing is more natural. The worldly man has only his worldly desires. The *Christian*, besides his Christianity, has the flesh;

and further, he has already abandoned his christian principles in order to please his flesh, by uniting himself to one who does not know the Lord.

The result of such an alliance is that he has not a thought in common on the subject which ought to be the most precious to his heart, with the person dearest to him in the world, and who is like a part of himself. They will have nothing but quarrels; as it is written, "How can two walk together except they be agreed"? (Amos iii. 3.) If not, they must first yield to worldliness and then take pleasure in it; but this sad result is lost sight of when they first place themselves in the position which renders it inevitable.

The Christian is drawn away little by little; he is not in communion with his Saviour, and he can find pleasure in the society of a person who is agreeable to him without thinking of Jesus. Christ has not sufficient power over his heart, to lead him to turn from his way and give up an affection, which he knows to be disapproved of by the Lord. He *binds himself* more or less by other motives, such as a feeling of honour, sometimes alas! by more detestable motives, such as pecuniary interest, and he sacrifices his conscience, his Saviour, his own soul, as far as it depends upon him, and, at all events, the glory of God. That which at first was nothing more than a *fancy has* become unrestrained will.

Observe how deceitful the heart is, and how it loses all self-command when it departs from God.

How wily and deceitful is our heart! What slaves does an idol make of us!

What a terrible thing it is to get away from God!

THE HOPE OF THE CHRISTIAN.

PAGES 335–348.

The source of this *hope*, and . . . . the only sure ground on which the heart can rest in appropriating it, is that all that I hope for is the fruit of the grace of Jesus, that in which His own heart finds its delight, in giving to us.

That His grace is the source of *it* every Christian will recognise.

Here, then, is one great and blessed part of our *hope*, "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." It is perfectness, in likeness to Christ, in ourselves morally, in its full result, for it is in glory. We shall be like Him.

We share in the glory; but the glory in which we share is His.

We shall be there with the Lord, ever with Him: no interruption, no decay of joy, but rather ever increasing delight, as there always is when the object is worthy of the heart, and here it is infinite.

"The glory thou hast given me I have given *them,*" the Lord says; "that they may be one,

s we are one: I in them, and they in me." [ohn xvii. 22.) If Christ is in us now the *ope* of glory, He will be in us then the *display* f glory.

We shall not lose the Holy Ghost by being ı glory; loss indeed it would be.

We shall have a white stone; that is, the erfectly approving testimony of the Lord; and n it a name written, which no man knew but e who received it. (Rev. ii. 17.) That is a joy nd communion and personal knowledge of the ord, which was for him alone who had it, etween his soul and Christ.

There is, besides all this, the presenting of ıe church to Christ; the glory of the kingdom, ıoking downwards, that is, towards that over hich we shall reign.

But how bright and blessed is the *hope* that is efore us, . . . to see Him—be like Him—with im in His own relationship with the Father— converse with Him with divine intelligence— before God with Him—enjoy unmingled, ıclouded blessedness of His presence—with ıd as Him—and yet to receive it all from im—to owe it all to Him.

I would have the reader remark, how all this y has its counterpart and commencement of alisation down here, save the glory of the ıdy alone.

In joys and sorrows there is a looking to

Jesus, a communion with Jesus, a dependence of heart on His approbation, in which none can participate. On high it will be perfectly enjoyed and possessed, in the white stone and the new name. The heart that knows Him could not do without this.

Let us remark, too, how various the joy is—and so it is now.

I delight in the nature of God.

I delight in my intimacy with Him.

I delight in the blessedness of being with the Son before the Father.

I delight in His being a man, with whom I am, yet one divinely perfect.

I delight in God and the Lamb—the blessed and glorious display of redeeming counsels and divine glory.

I delight in being like Christ.

I delight in all the saints being like Him.

I delight in His being glorified in them.

I delight in adequate service, in a full and perfect witness, in a fit and heavenly worship.

I delight in what is proper to God.

I delight in what is the glory of Christ Himself, as such; it is what is common to all, and what is peculiar to oneself.

The Christian will remark, too, that, in enjoying Christ in glory, he will not lose the blessed feeding on an humble Saviour. . . . If He is what we *hope* for in glory, He is what we need on earth.

We shall eat of that hidden manna which has nourished and fed our souls in our pilgrimage.

May *hope* be as living in the saints as the object of it is worthy of all their hearts. May they abound in *hope*, by the power of the Holy Ghost.

CHRISTIAN DEVOTEDNESS.

PAGES 349–362.

If there be one thing of importance now, it is christian *devotedness*. I do not separate this from christian doctrine, but found it on it.

I accept as the general rule that, any special call of God apart, Christians should abide in the calling wherein they are called. This is only the place of their walk, its motives and character are behind. These are summed up in one word—*Christ*. He is at once the life and the object or motive of life in us, giving thus its character to our walk. "To me," says the apostle, "to live is Christ." (Phil. i. 21.) There are two great parts of divine life, of which *devotedness* is one.

As to reward, *as motive* or merit, it is clear any such thought destroys the whole truth of *devotedness*, because there is no love in it.

The spring and source of all true *devotedness* is divine love filling and operating in our hearts: as Paul says, "The love of Christ constraineth us." (2 Cor. v. 14.)

Thus, in all true *devotedness*, Christ is the first and governing object; next, "His own which are in the world;" and then our fellow-men. First their souls, then their bodies, and every want they are in.

It (*devotedness*) is not the benevolence of nature, but the activity of divine love in the new man.

All true *devotedness*, then, is the action of divine love in the redeemed, through the Holy Ghost in them.

There may be natural benevolence clothed with a fairer name, and irritated if it be not accepted for its own sake.

There may be the sense of obligation and legal activity, which, through grace, may lead farther, though it be the pressure of conscience, not the activity of love.

The activity of love does not destroy the sense of obligation in the saint, but alters the whole character of his work.

The governing motive characterises all our walk: all is judged by it. A man of pleasure flings away money; so does an ambitious man. The covetous man thinks their path folly. The Christian judges of everything by Christ.

We have the privilege of forgetting self and living to Christ. Living to God inwardly, is the only possible means of living to Him outwardly. All outward activity not moved and governed by this is fleshly, and even a danger to the soul.

It is not *devotedness*, for *devotedness* is *devotedness* to Christ. I dread great activity without great communion.

The form of *devotedness*, of external activity, will be governed by God's will and the competency to serve; for *devotedness* is a humble, holy thing. *Devotedness* is a dependent, as it is a humble, spirit.

We shall find the flesh shrink instinctively from the fact and from the effect of *devotedness* to Christ, because it is giving up self, and brings reproach, neglect, and opposition on us.

If there be anything but Christ it will be *before* Christ, not *devotedness to* Him with a single eye.

It has another character: whatever its *devotedness* and activity, it is obedience. There

cannot be a righteous will in a creature, for righteousness in a creature is obedience. Adam fell, having a will independent of God.

GENESIS XXII.

PAGES 364–366.

Worship always supposes the will broken.

"*Thy son*,"—this word kindled in Abraham the tenderest of feelings; and he had to sacrifice that son! (Chap. xxii. 2.)

Nay, more; this name recalled to him the promises of God, and it was in this son they were to be fulfilled, for God had positively told him, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called."

But he whose will is subjected to God is satisfied of these two things, God will provide for it; and, I am with God. One who never comes to the end of His resources, even in the very failure of all the means He Himself might have pointed out for the accomplishment of His promises.

Knowing that the heart needs to be sustained under the trial, He sustains it by a new revelation, which enables it to triumph. Thus we see Hebrews xi. 19, that Abraham on the occasion of the sacrifice required of him, had a revelation concerning the resurrection, then so little known.

Far from those who accompanied him, (that

is, alone with Isaac and with God), Abraham received this revelation, and could offer the ram on the altar in the stead of his son, according as he had said, God will provide Himself a burnt offering. (Chap. xxii. 8.)

JOSHUA V.

PAGES 367–370.

I find a sufficiently palpable difference between the effect of the salvation that Christ has accomplished for us, and that which fits us for the enjoyment of things which are found in the heavenly country.

If we look to ourselves, we shall find ourselves incapable of enjoying the things which belong to us.

The Jordan must be passed.

We must cross what stops the way, Jordan, *death.*

Christ has made of *death* a passage, a way. *Death* is ours. (1 Cor. iii. 22.) We can only enjoy the promises of God, so far as we are *dead* to all here below.

If to-day I do not realise this *death,* I do not enjoy heavenly things.

Both for spiritual warfare and in spiritual enjoyment, we must be *dead* to this world and

to sin ; practically, there must be a stripping off of the flesh.

We must return to Gilgal, to the judgment of the flesh.

For the enjoyment of heavenly things, there must be Jordan and Gilgal—*death* and the *putting off of the flesh.* Then all is ours.

To be strong, we must be *dead* to the things of the flesh.

PSALM LXXXIV.

371–373.

The essential thought of this Psalm is, the *tabernacles* of Jehovah.

We see that, at all times, the intention and desire of God were to have a *tabernacle ;* wherefore God shews to Moses on the mountain a pattern of the *tabernacle.*

After the millennium, this desire of God shall be accomplished, according as it is spoken in Revelation. " Behold, the *tabernacle* of God is with men, and he will dwell with them." (Rev. xxi. 3.)

The word *tabernacle* has always the sense of a habitation of God with men. " How amiable are *thy tabernacles.*" (Ver. 1.)

Worship is the rest of the soul.

" Blessed are they that dwell in thy house."

(Ver. 4.) And impossible it is to dwell there without praising Him continually.

"A day in thy courts," &c. (Ver. 10.) Many of God's children are satisfied with being at the door, and there are even those who keep themselves outside.

Yet, if our unbelief, or the lusts of our heart, hinder us from advancing, we have at least "the door," for Christ is the "door;" and the "door," though it be the door only, is worth more than all that is in the world.

THE WISH OF PAUL IN CHAINS.

(ACTS XXVI.)

377–384.

"*I would to God* that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds." (Ver. 29.)

His soul was so happy that he *could desire* the same thing for others of which he had the consciousness for himself. Joy is always full of goodwill; divine joy, of love.

Such is the effect of the strange happiness that is produced in a soul where Christianity is fully received. It possesses a happiness which in principle leaves nothing to be desired.

We see moreover here, it is a happiness which outward circumstances cannot touch; it is a

fountain of joy springing up within the soul. The whole outward position of the apostle was but ill calculated to produce joy. He had languished two years in prison!

He was happy in his soul; *he desired nothing* but this happiness for himself or others, and the happiness which fills with perfect satisfaction is surely a remarkable happiness. True, he was bound with chains, but the iron of his chains reached not his heart. God's freed man cannot be bound with chains.

What made Paul happy? It was indeed the truth, but not immediately.

He was the "chief" of sinners. He becomes in three days the most remarkable apostle of grace—and how did that happen? It is a very simple thing. He had become acquainted with Jesus.

Paul sees the glory and he is arrested; no doubt that it is the Lord. "It is myself," says Jesus, "whom thou persecutest." (Acts xxvi. 15.) And there is a complete revolution in Paul, learned, religious, and a persecutor. But from the moment that he truly knew the Lord Jesus, he was one with Him, and he knew it.

ARE YOU PRAISING WITH CHRIST?

(PSALM XXII.)

PAGES 397–399.

"In the midst of the congregation *I will*

praise thee." After Christ had declared God's new name, He could only praise, He could not *but praise.* He will lead, and we should follow. "*My praise* shall be of thee." He will *sing praises*, and then He will sing with us. In the midst of the congregation *He praises*, and then in the great congregation.

Christ associates His beloved bride *with Himself*, in all His glory (save His Godhead). He adorns her with all the blessings His completed work had effected. He has united her to Himself, and He would not, we may say, be happy in heaven without her.

God loves me as He loves Christ. I dare to say that. He has glorified God by taking my place. It was a true transfer. When He sits in judgment, we shall be seated on thrones around Him. When He takes up Israel, we shall reign with Him.

Have your hearts found rest in a risen Saviour? Can you claim a part in *the praises* in the midst of the great congregation?

THE COMMUNION OF ABRAHAM WITH GOD.

(GEN. xv.–xvii.)

PAGES 400–404.

It is lovely enough to see God's ways of grace and condescension. He would come down and *talk with Abraham*, He could *eat with him*,

But for us it is another thing: we are called upon to feed on Christ Himself, "the bread of God which cometh down from heaven."

Promises end in myself; they minister to my need: "As thy day, so shall thy strength be." This is most sweet and precious, and we feel the need of such a promise; but when we look at all these promises, we think what we get for ourselves, and then our horizon is limited by what we need.

It is sweet, again, to get back to what it was at first, and to see God able, as it were, to come down to the tent door in the heat of the day. God came in the cool of the day to Paradise (Gen. iii. 8), but it was in vain, as far as *communion* was concerned—Adam hid himself.

There should be a going of the soul to God in a far *more intimate* way than to any one else.

There are two things in the way in which God revealed Himself in chapter xvii. First, there is the outspreading of grace to the Gentiles, "Thou shalt be a father of many nations;" because if He is the Almighty God, He could not be cooped up, if we may so say, in Israel. The second thing is, I will be a God "unto thee, and unto thy seed after thee" (Gen. xvii. 7); that is, more intimacy of *communion*, immediate relationship with God Himself. The nearer we get to Christ, the more shall we enter into this.

It is an astonishing favour that God should hus come down and put Himself at our lisposal.

"God talked with Abraham," "his friend" Gen. xvii. 3)—this is *communion.* What a lifferent idea we are apt to have of God! *Communion with* God is the retiring place of the heart.

It is essential for a soul to be brought into *berfect confidence* in God Himself, in order to a *valk* with God.

Christ never had a motive that the earth uggested; He walked through the world with livine motives.

ABRAHAM AND LOT.

(GENESIS XVIII., XIX.)

PAGES 406–411.

The destruction of Sodom is a figure of what vill happen when the Lord comes. They arried themselves as if the world was to last or ever.

Men make all possible arrangements for the uture; and yet, since the death of Jesus, the vorld cannot count upon a single day.

Because sentence against an evil work is not xecuted *speedily,* therefore the heart of the

sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. (Eccles. viii. 11.) It is the principle and the practice of infidelity all through.

The church, the Christian, has properly but one object—Christ in heaven, and therefore is called to be in heart separated from everything here below.

Abraham, as far as he was a stranger and pilgrim on earth, is the type of the faithful (Heb. xi. 16)—of such God is not ashamed to be called their God. He would be ashamed to own as His people those who make this world their fatherland.

As he followed God in the main faithfully, God took a *particular interest in him. Abraham is called "the friend of God."* (James ii. 23.)

On the other hand, *Lot's* wife ("Remember *Lot's* wife," Luke xvii. 32) left Sodom in bodily presence, not in heart. Her judgment is called to mind by the Saviour.

Accustomed to the ways and words of God, he (Abraham) quickly feels the divine presence; yet he beautifully waits until the Lord is pleased to discover Himself; acting all the while with a touching and instinctive deference.

Abraham enjoys the closest intercourse with Jehovah, who reveals His counsels to him. He learns from God the imminent destruction of Sodom. He appears to him in the plains of

Mamre. He comes before the tent door, enters, converses, and walks with him.

Intercession is the fruit of the divine revelation and fellowship. *Abraham*, separate from the world, and with the Lord upon the mountain, communes of the judgment which was about to fall upon the world below.

But He did more than *Abraham* asked. He withdrew *Lot* from Sodom and saved him. Nothing could be done till *Lot* was safe. (Gen. xix. 16–22.) God's eye was upon him. What blessedness to be able to reckon on His love for the righteous!

Lot and his daughters had been spared—saved so as by fire—not to their honour, but through the faithful care and tender mercy of the Lord. It was his unfaithfulness, indeed, that had placed Lot there; it was his unmortified desire after the good things of the world. (Gen. xiii. 10)

Next, he (*Lot*) dwelt in Sodom. (Gen. xiv. 12.) On the eve of its downfall "*Lot* sat in the gate of Sodom," in the place of honour there (chap. xix. 1); sad example of the earthly-minded believer in the path of declension! Such men dishonour the Lord, and pierce themselves through with many sorrows.

JESUS, THE AUTHOR AND FINISH OF FAITH.

(HEB. xii. 2.)

PAGES 412, 41

If a race is to be run, we need a forerun In Jesus we have got one who did run be us, and has become the *Captain and Compl of faith*, in looking to whom we draw stren into our souls.

While Abraham and the rest filled up their little measure, their several places, Ch has filled up the whole *course of faith.* Tl is no position that I can be in, no trial whate that I can endure, but Christ has passed thro all and overcome.

Whatever turns our eye away from Chri but a hindrance to our running the race tha set before us.

If I am running a race, a cloak, howe comfortable, would only hinder me and n be got rid of ; it is a weight and would prev my running. I do not want anything to tangle my feet.

The new man is ever a dependent man. moment we get out of dependence, we get the flesh.

OUR JOY IN HEAVEN.

(LUKE IX. 28–36.)

PAGES 415–418.

Let us look a little at this scripture, as shewing what our *joy* in the glory will consist of. We have the warrant of Peter (2 Pet. i. 16) for saying, that the scene represents to us the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our souls are not in a healthy state unless we are waiting for God's Son from heaven.

"And behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias." (Luke ix. 30.) They were with Him. And this will be our *joy;* we shall be with Jesus. (1 Thess. iv.)

"There talked with him two men." (Luke ix. 30.) When we read they talked with Him, we get the idea of the most free and familiar intercourse. Peter and the others knew what it was to have such intercourse with Jesus in humiliation; and what *joy* must it have been to have the proof that such intercourse with Him would be *enjoyed* in glory!

This will be our *joy* throughout eternity, when in glory with Christ—to dwell upon this theme, His decease accomplished at Jerusalem.

And this is the use to us of those vivid apprehensions of spiritual things which we may sometimes *realise.* It is not that we can be

always enjoying them and nothing else. But when for a season they have passed away, like this vision on the holy mount, they leave us alone with Jesus, to pursue the path of our pilgrimage with Him in spirit now.

GRACE REJECTED AND HEAVENLY GLORY OPENED.

(ACTS VII.)

PAGES 419–428.

Such are two of the main thoughts presented in this striking and instructive chapter. God was *rejected*, let Him speak or act as He might, and never more than when He displayed His grace. "Ye do always *resist* the Holy Ghost."

Man is *ever resisting* what God sends in blessing.

The moment a thing is built up which can be seen, man can trust in that, no matter what it may be. God may be gone; but if it be the tabernacle or the temple, some settled thing for the eye, man will trust in it, though it is the very thing God is about to judge.

Stephen's testimony is *utterly refused*, and the witness of Christ's *heavenly glory* is cast out of the city and stoned without mercy.

We have heaven *opened* four times in the

New Testament; and of these the first *when* the Lord was *upon the earth*. That the heavens should open upon Him was no marvel. On the last occasion, namely, Revelation xix., heaven is *opened* for the fourth time, and Christ is seen as coming to judge. In each of these heaven *opened* to Christ. But there was a third scene when heaven *opened*, and not to Christ. (Acts vii. 56.)

But Stephen's testimony only drew out the murderous *opposition* of the world. It had been guilty of *rejecting* Christ down here. It equally *rejected* Him, now that He is proclaimed as the exalted One in heaven.

To have the Holy Ghost is one thing; to be *filled* with the Holy Ghost is *another*. When He is the one source of my thought, I am filled with Him. When He has possession of my heart, there is power to silence what is not of God, and to guide in every act of my life and walk.

When we have not much power for prayer, or even to follow others, and our hearts get full of distracted thoughts—when there is little energy in our souls for praise and worship, we have but a feeble measure of the power of the Spirit; we are not *filled* with the Holy Ghost.

But the Son of man was *seen standing there*. Why *standing?* He could not sit until the last act of *rejection* was completed. What a tale!

His (Stephen's) heart was filled with Christ to the exclusion of care for his life.

The cross we shall have; and what of that? It is a good thing for us; it draws us away from the world; it breaks the will; it delivers from self, by cutting, it may be, the next link to the heart.

The cross has a delicious power, though not a pleasant thing; it would be no cross if it were.

GLORYING IN THE CROSS.

(GAL. VI. 4.)

PAGES 429–435

Nothing is so difficult as to take a man out of himself; it is impossible, except by giving him a new nature.

Man *glories* in anything that will bring honour to himself—anything that distinguishes him from his neighbour. It does not signify what it is (it may be even that he is the tallest man), anything his pride may come in, in that which gives him advantage over others.

Some may *glory* in their talents. There are differences in men's minds; vanity is seen more in some, wishing for the good opinion of others; pride more in others, having a good opinion of themselves. Wealth, knowledge, *anything* that distinguishes a man, he will

glory in, and make a little world around himself by it.

There is another thing, too, men *glory* in besides talent, birth, wealth, &c, and that is his religion. Take a Jew, you will find he *glories* in not being a Turk; the Christian, so-called, *glories* in that he is not a heathen and a publican. Man will thus take the very thing that God has given to take him out of himself to *accredit himself* with.

The measure of truth, connected with the religion men hold, is the very occasion of their *glorying*.

The subtlety of the enemy is seen in proporion as it is truth in which he makes a man *lory*. If you are *proud* of being a Christian, he whole thing is told at once.

It is quite another thing of course, for the rue, genuine child of God walking in the power f the cross, who *glories* in that he knows God.

Jonah was a true prophet, but, *glorying* in imself, he turned his religion into a ground of *elf-glorying*. He had rather have seen all Nineveh destroyed, than have his own credit as prophet lost.

Whatever you are decking yourself out with —it may be even be with a knowledge of cripture—*it is glorying* in the flesh.

Ever so little a thing is enough to make pleased with ourselves; what we should r notice in another is quite enough to raise c own importance.

Glorying in religion is a deeper thing. Wh ever comes from man must be worthless. man cannot *glory* in being a sinner. Conscier can never *glory*, and there is no true religi without *conscience.*

What is it then in religion that man *glor* in? It must always have a legal charact because there must be something for him to —hard penance, or anything—no matter at wl cost, if it only *glorifies self.*

When man *glories* in self there may be t truth in a measure, but it is of a legal charac always, because there must be something m can do for God. *Glorying* in the flesh is r *glorying* in sin, but, as in Philippians i religious *glorying*, *glorying* in something besic Christ.

When I can *glory* in the *cross*, there is end of *glorying* in self; for I am nothing bu sinner.

If you are not *glorying* in the *cross* it is yc own loss, not to say your own sin.

The very nature which is connected with t world is what occasioned Christ's death, the fore, when I *glory* in the *cross*, I am crucified the world.

REST.

(Written in Pau, 1879, when the thoughts of hymns addressed) the Father were much present to Mr. Darby's mind.) How ften, in his hymns, that word "Rest" occurs! But it was the rest of God" he longed for, and not rest only. It was on iis "rest" he loved to dwell, as that which would be true rest) him. But for the first also, he could not have failed to long, fter what may be truly described, as his "arduous and varied fe and labour."

There is rest for the weary soul,
  There is rest in the Saviour's love;
There is rest, in the grace that has made me whole,
  That seeks out those that rove.

There is rest in the tender love
  That has trodden our path below;
That has given us a place in the realms above,
  But can all our sorrows know!

There is rest in the calming grace
  That flows from those realms above;
What rest in the thought, we shall see His face,
  Who has given us to know His love!

There is rest in the midst of grief,
  For grief's been the proof of love;
'Tis sweet, in that love to find relief,
  When the sorrows of earth we prove.

There is rest in the Saviour's heart,
  Who never turned sorrow away,
But has found, in what sin had made our part
  The place of His love's display.

There is rest in the blessed yoke,
  That knows no will but His:
That learns, from His path, and the words He spoke,
  What that *loving* patience is.

E.

Where He too has gone before,
  Is the path which we have to tread ;
And it leads to the rest where sorrow's o'er,
  To the place where His steps have led.

* It is a significant fact, acted on generally and admitted, that the hymns of the late beloved J. N. D. express more accurately and adequately than any others, the full position and privileges both of the individual saint and the church of God, and especially our fellowship with the Father and His Son, and all it involves.—[ED.]

NEW BIRTH AND ETERNAL LIFE.

SCRIPTURE QUERIES AND ANSWERS THEREON.

(From *The Bible Treasury*, Jan. 1, 1867.)

Q. What is the bearing of the "New Birth" in John iii. 3–6, as compared with "Eternal life"? (Vers. 15, 16, &c.)

A. It is to be remarked that in John iii., not "*eternal life*" but simply the *kingdom of God is connected* with being "*born again.*" This is necessary for it. We get a nature suited to have to say to God in whatever way. It is the Spirit's work—a nature capable of knowing Him.

"*Eternal life*" is *connected* with *heavenly things*, and the lifting up of the Son of man, who is Son of God. This shews us what "*eternal life*" is. It is wholly in Christ (comp. *1 John* i.), and to us through the incarnation,

and necessarily also the death of the Lord Jesus. (Comp. John vi. 35–58.)

It is *in* Him, and promised to us before the world was, but brought into man by the incarnation (for He was in heaven), and we into its place and condition through His blessed death, resurrection, and ascension. (Comp. John vi. 62.)

"*Eternal life*" knows no other place—in Christ thus, who was and is "*eternal life.*" Here He, the Son of man, was in heaven.

Q. What of the "washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" in Titus iii.? of the renewing in Ephesians iv., Colossians iii., and of similar expressions in 1 Peter i., James i., as well as Matthew xix. 28?

A. We have the washing of "*regeneration*" and "*renewing*" of the Holy Ghost which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that being justified by His grace we should be heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

The "*renewing*" of the Holy Ghost is not merely "*regeneration*" or a new life. It is *objective*—bringing into the sphere we are introduced into by Christ and redemption—or new state of things *(new creation).*

"*Regeneration*" is more *subjective*, essential but "*subjective*," and in application does not, that I see, go beyond earthly things, but earthly

things with God—the desert now (not Canaan), and the desert to blossom as a rose, but not Canaan. So in 1 Peter i. 22, 23, it is "*subjective:*" "Ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth . . . being born again . . . by the word." No doubt, heaven is here full in hope; but "*the regeneration,*" the being "*born again,*" is "*subjective*" condition.

James i. 18, does not in fact reach out of the sphere down here.

In Peter it is "*begotten again.*"

In Matthew xix. 28, "*regeneration*" is clearly earthly, and a state of things.

So that what I get in "*regeneration*" is a "*subjective*" state, born of God, of the Spirit, of water, of the word, and, as a sphere, merely so far on earth, only *the foundation* of relationship with God.

But the Spirit as shed on us (Tit. iii.) goes farther. Here I have a "*renewing*" of the "Holy Ghost." The whole sphere of relationship is changed, and the hope of "*eternal life*" comes in. So in Colossians and Ephesians.

The washing of "*regeneration*" cleanses subjectively; and what is born of the Spirit is spirit, has its *essential* nature and characteristics; but the "*renewing*" of the Holy Ghost leads us into the whole sphere of that new state of things *into* which Christ has entered as risen and now

one up on high. It is shed on us through esus Christ. And though we must be born to ave life and have life if born, yet "*eternal life*" ; only known in redemption and the scene and tate into which redemption brings us. Hence, hough we have put on the "*new man*" in putting on the risen Christ, yet there is a '*renewing*" through the Holy Ghost in bringng us into the apprehension of the "*new reation*" where "*all things have become new.*"

Q. Has it (the washing of "*regeneration*" nd "*renewing*" of the Holy Ghost) to do with Baptism" as many suppose in John iii.? And hat of John vi.?

In John iii. water is in no way baptism. aptism is death, as is evident—my purifying, havg done with the nature in which I lived. The ater came out of Christ's pierced side; and life in the Son, the second man, and that conseuent on death as come amongst the first. herefore, it is said there, God has given to us *eternal life*," and as the water and blood rough death testify it to be in the second sen One, Son of God, so the Holy Ghost is a itness of it. Here again we have what *eternal life*" is.

"Ye are clean through the word which I ave spoken to you"—a new nature and moral fect that was produced and must be by John .; but the sphere did not thereby go out of

the world: by death and resurrection it clearly does. But the Son of man coming in, in the power of that which was before the world, and then dying and rising, introduces into the "*new creation.*" He abode alone while here, but by redemption and being in Him we have our place there, and to this the Holy Ghost corresponds.

Now, in John vi. we have this brought out; not the blessed Lord's death as offered to God, the one ground of all blessing, but the reception of it or entering into it by man.

He is the manna, the bread which came down from heaven—was not of this world, though in it and born of woman. This is expressly stated in John xvii. and carried on to the disciples. It is life to the world, Jew and Gentile, all merged in sin, in nature, and so children of wrath; and here Ephesians joins in chapter ii. We are then quickened together with Christ and set in Him in the heavenly places. But in John vi. we have the process in the apprehension and reception of Christ, the digesting by faith into the life of our own being. He is first the bread which came down from heaven to give life.

He remains alone. We have it only in resurrection, a new life and condition of man, because in nature he was away from God, in nature and wrath—a condition entirely away *from God,* yea, in enmity.

We are rejoiced to have a part in death, because it is death to the nature and system estranged from God, and have life only in the new condition in Christ.

To guard against false conclusions as to the term "*eternal life*," we must remember that the spared Gentiles of Matthew xxv. go away into it. Still even there it is those who have received Christ in His humiliation, in His messengers, and will have had share in the sorrow of a Christ the world rejects. (So the 144,000 of Revelation xiv., and the great multitude of chapter vii., though the matter be not there in hand.)

In John vi. we have One in whom is "*eternal life*" in nature and being, always in the bosom of the Father, living here, coming down and bringing this new heavenly thing, and dying, giving Himself even to death, to close the old thing and set it aside, so as to make an end of that and introduce us into the pure glory into which He is entered according to the worth of that which He has wrought. He has taken flesh, "*eternal life*" being in Him, and given it for the life of the world! It is the death we enter and receive in our souls, so as to have a part in the "*eternal life*" in Him.

The union with the Head is by the Holy Ghost—another truth founded on the ascension, yet supposing His death. In one sense death

goes deeper than union, because all God's moral nature is made good and glorified in it, and the question of sin is settled. Union is a special privilege of ours. In a word, Christ is "*eternal life*" with the Father, becomes man, and dies, setting aside for us the whole condition of man with God in the world, and thus takes up man into the new glory purposed: of which He was thus worthy.

Q. How do the Old Testament saints stand related to all this? How the future calling in the last days, and millennial saints?

A. The Old Testament saints will clearly have been "*born again*" and have the kingdom. They, as every one else blessed, are dependent on the work of Christ as propitiation (as in Rom. iii.). But there is more in the cross. He, Christ, was alone in His person that "*eternal life*" which was with the Father, and was alone such in the world. Hence the only-begotten Son, who *is* in the bosom of the Father, the Son of man who *is in* heaven (who else was there, or even had ascended?), He was this alone. He came, "*eternal life*," into this world, but was alone in the out-of-the-world, heavenly condition of relationship and being in which "*eternal life*" consists: which was before the world, not only in God, but in counsel for us, given us in Christ, manifested in Him alone in the world, *and now*, consequent on His being lifted up

and gone out of it into the heavenly place of which He brought word, that into which we are introduced in Him.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

(1 JOHN IV. 9–18.)

PAGES 436–441.

We learn a great deal more of what God is by knowing man; and we learn a great deal more of what man is by knowing God.

To know God, I must have His nature. I cannot know the nature of what I am not a partaker of. I do not know angels. I am not a partaker of the nature of angels.

We see two things in this chapter (1 John iv.) which give the soul immense delight. Verse 9 shews us the way God makes *His love* known. In verse 17 we see how *His love* is made perfect.

In verse 9, God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we may have life through Him . . . . a life separated altogether from nature and nature's affections and pleasures. It cannot be hinged in with selfishness. And what is my nature: is it not mere selfishness? If I look at my motives from day to day, what shall I find them? Are they not self? We have no idea how we are under the influence of self.

The more I look at this *love* (the love of God), the more I see of its perfectness. When there was not one single good thing in us, God commended *His love to us*. We were just sinners and nothing but sinners when Christ died to save us.

There is no accounting for His *love ;* there is no estimating it. There is no limit to His *love*.

If I have not rest, what I want is a deeper sense of sin. I must learn what sin is at the cross ; and then I shall see the *love* that has met it and suffered for it, and thus my soul gets rest.

To be hungry is not enough. I must be really starving to know what is in His heart towards me. When the prodigal was hungry, he went to feed upon husks ; but when he was starving, he turned to his father's house, and then learnt the *love* of his father's heart.

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

(PHIL. IV.)

PAGES 444–448.

Many epistles give us more doctrine, as Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians ; but none so give us the likeness of the *practical experience* of the apostle in his christian course.

If we are gathering up what is here, we have not such a sight of the glory of the Lord, as *Paul, had.* At the first glow of conversion there

is no difficulty in this; it is a very easy thing to count all things but loss then.

Grace is sufficient for favourable circumstances, but they are by far the most trying (spiritually) to the believer. There is an easy way of going on in worldliness, and there is nothing more sad than the quiet, comfortable Christian going on day by day, apart from dependence on the Lord.

"Be careful for nothing" (chap. iv. 6), when he (Paul) had everything to make him careful, when he knew what it was to be in prison, and to hunger in the prison.

God is not troubled about circumstances. Lay the whole burden upon Him, and "the peace of God shall keep your hearts and minds" (ver. 7), and you shall have it flowing into your hearts as a river, "passing all understanding." The word is, "Be careful for nothing," not even about the church, though God forbid that we should not care for it.

There is no such joy on earth (*save communion*) as seeing the saints walking in the truth.

When Christians first leave the path of dependence on the Holy Ghost, they find difficulties and uneasiness; but gradually they are apt to get used to it, and then there is less conscience and less uneasiness.

Circumstances need never hinder the power of spiritual joy.

CHRIST'S PLACE OURS.

(JOHN XVII.)

PAGES 449–460.

The first grand truth on which all is based, is, that He *places us* in *the same condition* as and *where He Himself is in.*

He was a perfect witness for the Father, and the testimony of the saint in the world is for Him also.

There is no *place* with God for any one out of Christ. God cannot have persons *out of Christ* with Him, nor in a half state of glory.

He sets us in the *same position* as Himself. "They are not of the world" (ver. 16), stands good, even as regards our path and position.

The world knows us not because it knew not Him. Our hearts would find consolation here if in conscious *fellowship* with Jesus. The saint has to go through this world without the support of it.

The life of the saint down here is *continued separation.*

Every believer is a letter of recommendation of the grace of God, shewing what God is. Christ was the living epistle of God on earth.

Unity is spoken of three times in this chapter, the first being absolute *unity* as having the very same nature as Christ.

Secondly, not only *union*, but *communion*. "Neither pray I for these alone . . . . that they all may be one." (Ver. 20.)

Thirdly, *display*—the full *display* of redemption, when the world will see the oneness, and the holy angels also, and we, having glory and power from Christ, shall see the Father.

The *display* is "that the world may know," &c. (Ver. 23.) Now the world does not know us, but then the world shall know that we have been loved *as Christ*.

There is a difference between good and spiritual desires, and the power of the Holy Ghost taking of the things of Christ and shewing them to us.

God has set us here as the epistle of Christ.

THE MAN CHRIST JESUS.

(PSA. XVI.)

PAGES 461–466.

What we find written in the Psalms is primarily connected with the Jews, or the Lord Jesus Himself, and particularly as Messiah.

Christ is viewed there as associated with Israel, and enters into all the sufferings of the holy remnant. Then there are certain psalms which belong personally to Himself.

The gospels display the One in whom was no selfishness.

He could warn Peter in Gethsemane, and comfort the dying thief on the cross. His heart was above circumstances. We see that He was always sensible to them. "I am poured out like water." "My bones are out of joint." "My heart is like wax." (Psa. xxii.) *He* was the tried man.

Whatever love dictated, that *He did.*

We find divine utterance in the Psalms for all our sorrows.

Christ is in His [the Father's] presence as man for man, as our forerunner and our way.

There is not a place faith cannot find Christ in.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD AND THE SHEEP.

(JOHN X.)

PAGES 469–476.

The person of the Lord Jesus will always afford food for our souls, if we study Him.

The first thing we find in Him is absolute submission; and notice that this, though true of the *Shepherd* primarily is true also of all who follow the *Shepherd.*

Why did He bear all the contempt poured upon His words and works, Son of God as He was? It was for the sake of *the sheep.*

The *sheep* know the voice of Christ, and if they have not got His voice, they stop until they have. There is one voice they know.

The moment Christ's voice has reached me, it is enough; and this gives a peace and quietness in one's path that nothing else does.

If not the *shepherd's* voice, it is dreaded. "A stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him." (Ver. 5.) The *Shepherd* does not frighten, and His voice having once reached the heart, nothing else is needed.

If Adam left his first estate, it was sin; but Christ could humble Himself, and it was the perfectness of love.

Christ's sheep have safety too. "None can pluck them out of my Father's hand." They have liberty, "going in and out," and they have all the food God can give. They "find pasture," and what more will they have? They will have the glory by-and-by.

What Christ gives must be holy, for He is holy. "They shall never perish." (Ver. 28.) A *sheep* is a perishing thing; but His *sheep* do not perish. We may fall asleep, or we may be changed.

The Father and the Son are *one* in divine essence, as they are in efficacious love to the *sheep*.

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THE POWER OF CHRIST IN RESURRECTION AND GLORY,

OR,

THOUGHTS ON PHILIPPIANS III. AND MARK X.

PAGES 477–486.

In Philippians iii. we have a striking illustration of the effect produced by the Holy Ghost in a soul which was indwelt by Him.

It is important to remark *the contrast* which exists between such a one, and the man who is not full of the Holy Ghost.

He [Paul] had been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, the most celebrated Rabbi; he was a citizen of Tarsus, a city renowned (if we adopt modern phraseology) "as a university," he had been well trained in all the acquirements of the day. Moreover, he was privileged in having led a blameless life, as he tells us in verse 6. All this was very precious to him as a man, *so long as he had not seen Christ.*

The apostle is troubled by nothing that he meets on his way; he sees as clear as noonday that all that is not Christ is loss.

This chapter (Mark x.) presents us with one in circumstances *similar to Paul, but not full of the Holy Ghost.* He is portrayed, however, as a man of a character altogether lovely; but *Christ* was not his object, and natural loveliness

ed naught. Yet his character was such it cted the attention of the Lord. Jesus d him. (Ver. 21.)

lowever lovely and estimable the *young* ı may have been, he does not take up cross. When the state of his heart is in :stion, he has no will for what is Christ's.

He said not, as *Paul*, "I suffer the loss of all .ngs, and do esteem them but dung; that I ay win Christ." (Phil. iii. 8.)

Paul, having seen the *glory of* God, stops ot before he has said, "I shall be there where :hrist has the right to be. There is my place oo: all else is but dung and dross. Yes, all else is for me loss." (Phil. iii. 8.)

If Christ is thus before our eyes, all that is not Christ is an embarrassment.

The Lord said, "Verily I say unto you, There is no one who has left father, or mother," &c. You have been obliged to break, for My sake, ties here below: well, you shall find the same, stronger and more perfect, among the children of God; and, at the end, eternal life. There are souls who have apprehended these things.

It is the cross which takes from us all tha which hinders our realising *Christ in glory*.

If death gives us more conformity to Chris

we need not stop to consider what suffering the flesh may find therein.

I desire to possess Him just as I see Him; and if to gain that, or a fuller measure of it, I must pass through death, to me to die is gain. (Phil. i. 21.)

Where there is the energy of the Spirit, there is light, and a single eye which makes us judge that Christ is worth all, and that all else is worth nothing: and this purifies the saint's heart.

The effectual presence of the Spirit crucifies egotism, and gives us freedom of thought about ourselves while on the way; it occupies us with but one object—Jesus: to be conformed to the pattern and to look to Him is all we have to do, and this purifies the heart.

If there be sufferings by the way, well, it is but conformity to Christ; if death, it is gain.

In Mark we have the young man who would not abandon his riches and take up the cross in order to have heaven; then the disciples following Jesus in fear, yet following. In Philippians iii. we see Paul following the Lord, without fear and with joy, whatsoever sufferings might be his, because he loved Christ as Christ for His own sake.

E BELIEVER ENTERING INTO GOD'S REST.

(HEB. IV.)

PAGES 487–498.

hat which is specially set before us in this ›ter is the comparison of the state of Israel he wilderness and our analogous state with entering into *God's rest.*

The more we can bring our souls to *lean upon d*, whether as it respects salvation, sanctifica- n, or *the rest*, or heaven, or glory to come, garding it as *God's rest*, *God's* heaven, *God's* ory, as much as it is *God's* sanctification and *od's* salvation, the more shall we understand ur full blessing. We never get a blessing in ts true value, until we see it is all *God's.*

If I am thinking of *my rest*, I shall be think- ng of my toil and my labour. This is true, but his is not the measure of *the rest*: in order to et the full measure it must *be God's*—some- hing so good and so blessed that it can be *od's rest.*

There is no *rest* worthy of those who possess he life and the glory and the righteousness o od, but the *rest of God.*

God makes us partakers of His holiness : s ikewise He makes us partakers of *His rest.*

The labour of a saint is of God.

Persons suppose that when a believer labo

it must be to get up to God; and if not, of what use is it to labour. Miserable thought! The saints' labour is the sort of labour which was in Christ, when He came from God to work the works of God.

Still that is not *rest;* labour is not *rest.* We have not ceased from our works. We have *rest* of conscience, it is true, but not *rest* from the labour of love.

We do not obtain any promise without a spiritual victory. This is *not rest.*

What, then, is the *rest of God?* In order to have *God's rest,* we must have His mind in order that we may delight in what *He* delights in. If so, I never can have complete *rest* until things are in accordance with God's mind. God may act in grace in, and towards, things as they are now; but He cannot take His *rest* in them.

If under the law, there is not *rest.*

The first thing is to have the great question —your subjection to Christ, and so acceptance with God through the cross—settled, and then the conscience gets *rest.* If I am uncertain whether God will save me, I cannot speak of *rest;* the conscience must first have *rest.* And here, be it observed, that when God deals with man as to *rest* of conscience, it is not what man is to do, but what he is; not what is the fruit merely, but what is the tree.

When God had made everthing, He ceased

from His works. Sin has destroyed His *rest.* It may be modified by a number of things, but there is nothing which God *rests* in, for evil is all around ; and where we have Satan's power to contend with, there can be no *rest* to the saints.

Not that we have any uncertainty of the *rest;* but by virtue of the joy, through the Holy Ghost, of entering into this *rest,* we groan on account of all around.

God cannot *rest* in the corruption of sin in the world as it now is ; and therefore He is bringing in the new man to *rest* in a new state of things, which He creates for Himself. But it is not in *rest* yet, whilst in the midst of evil ; therefore there remaineth a *rest.* (Ver. 9.)

The heart of the renewed man *rests* in the *rest* which God has accomplished in the Lord Jesus Christ as to judgment, for there is God's *rest ;* and it looks for *the rest* which He is about to fulfil in Christ.

He [God] cannot *rest* until He has accomplished all His purposes, and brought the Lord Jesus Christ into all that scene of blessedness ; and this is *God's rest :* and that is *the rest* into which we are to be brought ; *a rest* fit for the new man in Christ.

The more I look at the Lord Jesus, as God has accepted Him, the more my desires flow after this *rest.*

When *rest* of conscience is obtained, I find there is a work to be done in the meanwhile by the Spirit working in love and energy in the new nature. I have joy in God in looking up. I serve God in looking down. There is work going on in the patience of hope and labour of love.

He [the Apostle Paul] had the thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him. This was very profitable, but it was *not rest.*

God never *rests* until He brings us into what satisfies His desire. "He shall *rest* in His love." (Zeph. iii. 17.)

When perfected in glory, in God's presence, it will be the *rest of God* for us.

LIFE IN THE SON.

(JOHN V.)

PAGES 499-507.

The main subject in the Gospel of John is *life.* "The Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . In Him was *life,* and the *life* was the light of men." (Jno. i. 4.)

The first epistle of John gives just the same thing—"The word of *life,*" and *life* given in atonement—but the main subject is *life.* Christ gives *life* on the ground of forgiveness.

I have no strength to keep the law, and consequently I have no hope of getting *life* and *righteousness* under its principles.

Now, God requires holiness. Dare I look to what I am? No; but at Christ. "In Him was *life*, and the *life* was the light of men."

It is no use to be striving to mend and improve self, for self must die.

His [man's] very need deprives him of the power of using the remedy. "There is no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool."

On Christ hangs all. He both provides the blessing and gives power to use it. He gives *life*. "The Son quickeneth whom He will." From His own word we learn the wondrous truth, that He is become our *life*. We get *life* by Jesus Christ. *Life* is come down from heaven, and if I am resting in faith on this, it is mine.

When I see Christ before God, I know that my sin is all put away, and that I have *life* in Him. I have *life in the Son*, and not in the creature. If I am hunting out *life* in myself, I must break off with Christ.

Eternal life is never said to be in us: we have it, but it is in Christ; and the standard is kept up in my soul by looking at Him. (2 Cor. iii. 18.)

I have got *eternal life*, for I have got the Son. If I have not the Son of God, I am yet in my sins.

The moment I see Christ risen and in heaven, I cannot but know that my sins are all gone, and I have *life* and righteousness; and He is the standard of both. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word." (Ver. 24.)

It is written that we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Does this thought distress me? "He quickeneth whom He will." (Ver. 21.) Do you think He is going to judge those He has given *life* to?

Great confusion rises in the mind from mixing up the *resurrection of life* with the resurrection of judgment.

If I am brought into such a place before God as to listen to Christ, and receive from Him, then I have *life*.

If my soul has bowed to Christ—if I have listened to Him—if I have learnt from Him, owning that I was lost, then I have a portion in *life* that settles every question of judgment. There is a judgment, sure and inevitable, for man; but it is altogether outside this *eternal life*. I must be in the one place or the other, either raised in the resurrection of *life*, or in that of judgment. I cannot have a portion in both.

This vile body shall be changed like unto His glorious body. The full power of *life* will then be upon my body, as it is now in my soul.

HE PRESENCE OF THE SPIRIT IN JOHN XIV. COMPARED WITH CHAPTERS XVI., XVII.

PAGES 508–515.

There are three things quite distinct from ch other—conscience, life, and power.

There may be conviction of *conscience*, as in erod when he heard John preach; but he was ıt converted. A man may know he is doing ·ong, but this does not give him *power* ·ainst it.

Life, a new spiritual being, is another thing. gives activity to the conscience. A new ture is there with its feelings, desires, and ·ections, but without power.

The third thing alluded to is the *power of* ? *Spirit of God.*

There are three ways in which the Holy ıost is spoken of in these three chapters. In apter xv. Christ is (ver. 26) the One who ıds; in chapter xiv. the *Father* (ver. 16) ıds; in chapter xvi. *He is come* as a person earth. The difference between chapters ·. and xv. it is important to notice.

If you have only to be faithful in witnessing · the Lord one day, you want *power*, or you ıuld be like Peter in the judgment hall, curs- ; and swearing.

When Christ is spoken of as giving the Holy Ghost, it is always *for service*, witnessing for Him.

Our proper portion we get in chapter xiv. There is the very outstreaming of the Father's love, "I will pray the Father," &c. (Ver. 16.)

It is He who now gives me the consciousness of God's loving me as He loves Jesus.

The Holy Ghost, while He is the spirit of power is, then, He who gives me the consciousness of my blessing.

If my spirit is wrapped up in the love of Christ, there will be rivers of water flowing out. There is no effort in shewing forth the love of God, if my soul is dwelling in it.

If I am not in communion, it is for the Holy Ghost to speak to my conscience, instead of using me. If I get knowledge merely to communicate it, I shall be as dry as a millstone.

What a blessed thing that there is this living power of the Holy Ghost for the saints.

AS IS THE HEAVENLY.

(1 Cor. xv. 48.)

PAGES 519–532.

We have borne the image of the first *Adam, in* all the consequences of his sin a

uin, and we shall bear the image of the second Adam. But He lays down first this great truth or our hearts, "As is the heavenly, such are ney also that are *heavenly*." It is what we are ow.

There is the first Adam, of the earth, with nose that pertain to him, earthy; and there is ne second Man, the Lord from *heaven*.

There are these two Adams, and I get in oth the pattern and model of all other men nat are after their image.

I see the first Adam, fallen, wretched, and orrupt; then I see the other Adam that becomes, in a spiritual sense, the head of a race ter He has taken that place in God's counsels glory.

I have felt latterly that, the more we get at the cts of the Lord's life on earth, the more power nere will be. We do not sufficiently present cts, but we reason upon the value of facts. I n persuaded the more the facts of the gospel e presented to people's souls, the more power ere will be.

I see the power of God coming in and taking at very Christ when He was down in the epths of death and setting Him at His own ght hand in *heaven*.

Here then I have found a positive actual *verance;* and so truly was this the case

that Christ can celebrate the name of God in association with others. "I will declare thy name unto my brethren," &c. (Psalm xxii. 22.)

Now I have got the Man Christ Jesus in *heaven* after atonement has been made.

Exactly the same power that wrought when God took Christ from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand, has already wrought in you that believe, and you have got a place with Him *there;* and therefore, "As is the earthy," &c.

When we sit *with* Him we shall be like Him, but as to our real condition before God, even now we are sitting in *heavenly* places *in* Christ.

I must look at Christ to see what I am, and I say, "As is the *heavenly*," &c.

This is true, that the Christ in whom we are is in *heaven.* He is not here, He is in the presence of God, and we are in Him there; and even though we do not realise always our place in Christ.

I see this perfect Christ set apart for me in *heaven*, and I say I must walk according to that pattern.

"FULNESS OF JOY."

1879

Oh! bright and blessed hope!
When shall it be,
That we His face, long loved
Reveal'd shall see!

Oh! when without a cloud,
His features trace,
Whose faithful love, so long,
We've known in grace;

That love itself enjoy,
Which—ever true—
Did in our feeble path
Its work pursue.

O Jesus! not unknown,
Thy love shall fill
The heart in which Thou dwell'st,
And shalt dwell still!

Still Lord! to see Thy face,
Thy voice to hear;
To know Thy present love,
For ever near

To gaze upon Thyself,
So faithful known,
Long proved in secret help
With Thee alone;

To see that love content
On me flow forth,
For ever Thy delight,
Clothed with Thy worth!

O Lord! 'twas sweet the thought
That Thou wast mine!
But brighter still the joy
That I am Thine;

Thine own, O Lord, the fruit,
The cherish'd fruit
Of Thine all perfect love!
No passing root
Of evil e'er will dim
Thy cloudless rays;
But a full heart pour forth
Thine endless praise!

Nor, what is next Thy heart,
Can we forget:
Thy saints, O Lord, with Thee
In glory met.

Perfect in comeliness
Before Thy face,
The eternal witness, all,
Of Thine own grace,

Together, then, their songs
Of endless praise,
With one harmonious voice,
In joy shall raise!

Oh! joy, supreme and full!
Where sunless day
Sheds forth, with light divine,
Its cloudless day!

WE HAVE THIS TREASURE.

(2 Cor. iv. 5.)

PAGES 534–539.

It is wonderful the liberty the Holy Ghost gives in the soul.

We possess *this treasure*, and we have delight in it.

He [Paul] had *the treasure* (ver. 7), but not *in glory*, therefore he says, "We groan,

earnestly," &c. (2 Cor. v. 2.) He was not groaning because of the weariness of the way, the trials and difficulties here; but he had such a consciousness of the blessedness of *the treasure*, that he groaned to possess it unhinderedly in the presence of God.

We have this *treasure* in earthen vessels. (Ver. 7.) What *treasure?* Christ. I have this One—Christ. He is *the treasure.* I have it in an earthen vessel; still I have it.

Another view of it is Christ, the life down here. When I look at Him down here, I can say, "There is my life." If I look at myself, I see the life mixed up with much that ought not to be; but when I look at Jesus, what obedience, what patience, what graciousness! and I say, This is my life.

When I think of power, I must look up to Christ in glory for it.

I have a righteousness perfect, and so infinite, that I can never get out of it.

Christ is the centre of everything for the heart.

When I think of the exceeding and eternal weight of glory, it may seem too much for me; but when I see the Lamb there, as the light thereof, it puts my affections in play.

It is the Lamb that was slain for me. The Lamb that took away my sins.

THE WAY OF A CHRISTIAN'S POWER.

(2 Cor. xii.)

PAGES 541–559.

This chapter presents to us, in a remarkable manner, the *way* in which *power* comes whereby a Christian can walk through this world.

It is not merely now a path in which he can walk, but the *way* by which he may have strength to walk in it, and what the perfect walk of God is in order to his walking in this path.

In the beginning of the chapter a man was caught up to the third heaven; he was in the highest extreme of spiritual blessedness. Such blessedness indeed he had been conscious of, that it was not suited to speak of when he got back into his natural state. No doubt his faith was strengthened by it for his work, but he could not speak of such things.

Now there is the highest state of spirituality which you can suppose, and yet it is that which is true for us all. No doubt it was brought home to the apostle in a special manner, but the thing that he so realised is true of us.

Of course, it is not that every one goes up into the third heaven; but all have the blessedness, on the one hand, of a man in Christ, and, *on the other*, the incorrigible wickedness of the *flesh*.

The title that took Paul to the third heaven takes all there. We do not realise it now to the extent that he did, but still that title gives us our place there. We are come to God in glory now; that is the place that is given to us. And therefore he says, I do not talk about Paul—"I know a man in Christ."

I do not get a man in the flesh, but a man in Christ. That is where the Spirit of God sets a Christian. It is the place of every believer. They may have great exercises of heart before getting there; but where he sets them is not in the flesh but in Christ.

I now [when converted] get the consciousness of the weakness that sin has produced in my flesh, and I say, Somebody must take up the work for me: I cannot do it myself. (Rom. vii. 24.) I cannot get out of that condition. "Who shall deliver me?" Mark the answer. "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. vii. 25.) Why so? Because "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."

It is very disagreeable work to get to know ourselves, but very useful work.

It is very humbling and trying to be made nothing of, but very useful, because we are all disposed to think too well of ourselves.

Lest then Paul should be exalted above measure, a thorn in the flesh is given to him—something that made him contemptible in his preaching.

Here the apostle was preaching, and his manner of preaching was contemptible, and yet hundreds of people were converted through it.

Well, this does not come from what is contemptible; it does not come from Paul but from God. The Lord then, when He had made him feel his weakness, says, "My grace is sufficient for thee; my *strength* is made perfect in weakness." (Ver. 9.)

If Paul had got strength, Christ need not have had so much for him; but if Paul had none, the strength that came from Christ was in him. The man had been brought into conscious weakness that *the power of Christ* might rest upon him.

We get into mischief just when we get into independence of God. And therefore it is that we so often see a Christian have a fall, after a season of great joy. Why? Because his joy has taken him away from dependence upon God.

When I am emptied of self, and am in distresses and infirmities and necessities for Christ's sake, then I can say, I will glory in *them. Why?* "That *the power* of Christ may *rest upon me.*"

This is not the man in Christ, but *the power Christ* resting on him, as he walks down re—it is Christ in the man.

If I have been in the third heaven, and come t of it to be engaged in service, I may go on th my affections the same, spiritually and orally, and when I go back to it, I enjoy it the more.

When there [the third heaven], so little ought was there of self, that he [Paul] did not ow whether he was in the body or out of it. People may say all this is presumption. low me to say a word about that. Are you Christ? If you are not in Christ, you are it; it is no good saying it is presumption. you are not in Christ you are lost; if you e in Christ you are safe.

The man in Christ has got his standing with od; and when he has that, his business is manifest Christ before the world. There he *ants power.* He wants present *power.* To sincere is not enough.

You will meet with temptation, you will have ur business, your trials of one kind or another, d you want the *power* that gives Christ a eciousness to you, that makes everything u meet with to be as nothing to you.

It is Christ Himself that becomes *your power* the *power* of Christ resting upon you.

His power you get in your weakness, as your *ver to walk* through this world.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST

AND THE

EXPERIENCE THAT FLOWS FROM IT.

(EPH. V.)

PAGES 563-572.

The more one looks into it, the more there really is a deep sense of its perfectness. I see the perfect *love* that is the source of it all—infinite, unspeakable *love*, a *love* which God's very nature, and being, and purpose about us too, express.

When I look at the way it is accomplished, I see the perfectness of Christ's work, the absoluteness of giving Himself up entirely.

Christ "*loved* the church, and gave himself for it:" that is the first thing.

Now the effect is to put us into the *light*, as God is in the *light*—into the *light* that makes all things manifest.

There will be trials, and trials with God are perhaps the brightest spots in any man's life.

A man takes care to do all for his wife as he would for himself; so does Christ to the church. He nourishes it and cherishes it.

And it is our privilege to go along with Christ, to be associated with Christ in caring *for the* church.

We can count upon Christ actively.

If I *love* the church and the saints rightly, I shall have the consciousness of Christ's *love* to them, and sympathy with Him in it. I grant *His love* will attract us.

He will tell me of *His love*, and make me find out, by recalling it, that I neglected it.

The apostle Paul himself besought the Lord that the thorn in the flesh should be taken away. But the moment he got the clue of divine *love* working in it, he said, I would not have it gone for the world. He glories in his infirmities, that the *power of Christ* might rest upon him. (2 Cor. xii. 9.)

Christ's every-day care over us, and the exercise of His *love*, reveal that *love*, and bring the heart back to it.

OUR RELATIONS TO CHRIST.

(Rev. i. 4–7; xxii. 16–21.)

PAGES 574-595.

I have taken these two passages which precede and come after all the prophetic part of the book, as giving us the relationships in which the saints stand to Christ.

One abstract remark may be made. Our affections and our duties flow from the relationship *in which* we are set. It is clear that, if we *are creatures* of God, our duties as such flo

from our knowledge of that. So with our earthly duties and affections—they flow from our relationship one with another, whether as husband and wife, or as father and child.

The relationship must be known as mine, in order to possess the affections belonging to it. I cannot love *Christ as a Saviour*, if I do not know whether He is a Saviour or not to me; I cannot love God as a Father, if I am not sure whether or not I am a child.

If I take Christ as He presents Himself at the end of this book: immediately the Spirit and the bride say, Come. If I do not know that I belong to the bride of Christ, how can I, when He thus presents Himself to me, say to Him, Come?

He does bring us, by the salvation which He has wrought, into *relationship with God;* He gives us a known settled place before God; and then our affections and duties flow from the place we are in.

They are not the means of obtaining the place, but that which belong to the place we are in.

You cannot speak of any glory of Christ or of God, that does not awaken in the heart of the saint the consciousness of what God and Christ are to itself.

If it were offered to ever such a decent *man of the* world to go to heaven to-day

he would not—nor to-morrow either. When then is he to go? When he cannot help it. If he must die, he would rather go to heaven, but there is not a man of the world but would stay out of heaven as long as possible.

If you take these two passages, you will find in one what Christ has done for us, and the place in which He has put us, and in the next the relationship which flows from it, and the conduct consequent upon it.

A man of the world can be generous, but he does not bring another person into his own condition. This is what Christ does. He gives them His Father's love—"That the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." He puts us into His own place. This is perfect love.

He is the bright and morning star. What is that? It is what is seen by those who during the night are watching.

It is never said of Christ that He was bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, when He was down here. But now that He is at the right hand of God, we are bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh.

Just as Eve was of Adam we are of Christ.

We shall reign with Christ, but to be with *Himself is better.*

The first affection is towards Christ Himself;

but the bride would have every saint to join in these affections, and in the desire to have the bridegroom. And what next? We turn round to those who may be athirst bidding them to come, and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.

The first effect of the Spirit's turning our eye to Christ, is the desire that Christ should come.

I have an affection created in me by grace, but it is satisfied. I have got what my soul wants.

You cannot enjoy Christ without knowing it.

All the things that will make me blessed in heaven I have now.

If I am of the bride of Christ, let me seek to be consistent therewith.

AFFLICTION'S LESSONS.

A LETTER FROM A FRIEND ON THE DEATH OF A CHILD.

PAGES 596–599.

The knowledge of the love of God, which is come into this place of death, has brightened with the most blessed rays all its darkness.

It is a world of sorrow; and the longer *we know it,* and the nearer even we walk to

the Lord, the better we shall know it to be such.

I do not mean that none of our sorrows are chastenings: we know that they often are such to His most beloved ones, as we see in Job. By all, save Christ, there is all grace to be learned by them.

It is only in the part that has to be broken and corrected that we suffer; a touched affection, when Christ is with us in the grief, is of infinite sweetness, though the sweetness of sorrow.

It is only when the will mixes itself up with the sorrow that there is any bitterness in it, or a pain in which Christ is not.

There is a mass of things in the sincerest of us of which we are not aware, which are not brought into subjection to God.

I never saw a family the same thing after the first death that it was before. There was a breach in the circle. What belonged to the whole body of affections and life of this world was touched, was found to be—mortal: it was struck in its very nature.

A whole system of affections is touched: we feel that death has its place and part in them.

Death, and the affections which belong to this world, have been found to meet. But all this is well; for death is come in.

Besides, we live in these things; our will lives in them; and when the will is broken, so far as it is so, it is broken for everything.

We learn more to lean on what never breaks —not to lose our affections, but to have them more in connection with Christ.

But then Christ never makes a breach, except to come in and connect the soul and heart more with Himself; and it is worth all the sorrow that ever was, and more, to learn the least atom more of His love and of Himself; and there is nothing like that, nothing like Him; and it lasts.

But, besides, there is a useful work by it in our own hearts; and so more capacity to know, and enjoy, and learn communion with, Him; more capacity to delight in and understand God.

To know, and to know the value of, what He delights in; more moral capacity to delight in what is excellent.

We little know what high and blessed things we are called to. Oh that the saints knew it better! to be with, and have common joy and communion with, God!

Some have much of it down here. It is opened out to them.

The Lord "turns man from his purpose, and hides pride from man." Oh what a profitable thing it is to have that hidden from us!

PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE PSALMS.

My purpose in this series of papers is *not to interpret the Psalms*, but to draw from them some portion of spiritual instruction and edification they afford souls.

The Psalms afford us special light on the government of God and the sympathies of the Spirit of Christ with His people.

This, in the first instance, has the Jews for its object and centre of display. God's ways in government apply to us Christians also.

If it is not the highest ground on which a Christian is viewed, for that is heavenly; it is a most important and interesting one, and brings out all the tenderest displays of divine care, the care of Him who counts the very hairs of our head, and the seriousness and vigilance required in walking before God, who never swerves from His holy ways, who is not mocked, nor withdraws His eyes from the righteous.

PSALM I.

The government of the earth is plainly pointed out in the first psalm, and the character of those whom that government blesses.

He it is who keeps separate from the wicked in his way, and delights in the law of Jehovah, and meditates on it.

These two psalms [Psa. i. and ii.] lay the basis of all the rest.

The counsel of the *ungodly*, the way of *sinners*, and the seat of the *scornful* are avoided. The ungodly have plans, counsels of their own will, their own way of viewing things, and arrangements to obtain their purpose. There the just is not *found.*

The *sinner* has a path in which he walks, pleasing himself there: the just does not *walk* with him.

The *scornful* are at ease, despising God: there the just will not sit.

PSALM II.

This psalm announces the establishment of Christ's earthly triumph and royalty in Zion, when the heathen shall be given Him for an inheritance.

The government of God does not secure the good from suffering as it will then, but turns suffering to spiritual blessing, and restrains the remainder of wrath, giving a glorious reward for our little sorrows.

We have to learn our own lesson in patience. This the Psalms will teach us.

PSALM III.

When Jehovah comes in the heart *before* those who trouble me, all is well. He is a glory, *shield*, and lifter up.

I *cried*, and He heard. That is certain. It is an immense thing, in the midst of trial and difficulty, to be sure of God's hearing.

"I laid me down and slept; I awaked: for Jehovah sustained me." How emphatic and simple!

We are foolish as to difficulties and trials, measuring them by our own strength instead of God's, who is for us if we are His.

PSALM IV.

This psalm affords us another most important principle, the effect of a good conscience in calling upon God in our distress. It is not here a good conscience as justified from sin, but a practically good conscience, giving confidence toward God.

"Hear me when I call, *O God of my righteousness.*" He does not say, Justify me, O God," but, *Hear me.*

PSALM V.

Furnishes the occasion of saying a word or two on the calls for judgment which are many times found in the book.

There is constancy of cry in the presence of enemies. It is to Jehovah the tried one looks; but it is on the ground of the righteous character and government of God which makes it impossible for Him to look on evil complacently.

He will destroy the violent and deceitful man. And this is right.

The Christian feels God ought not to let successful evil go on for ever. When his mind rests on the government of God, he looks for the removal of evil by judgment, and rejoices in it; not thinking of the evil doer, but of the righteousness and the result.

The Jew, having his portion on the earth, "for the meek shall inherit the earth," &c., looks for the removal of the violent and deceitful man, in order to his own comfort and rest.

Not so the Christian. He leaves the violent man here and goes to heaven. He walks, as to his personal walk, in the time of grace, and leaves it for glory.

Righteous judgment, I repeat, his soul owns and acquiesces in. But he looks not for it for his own gain or liberty. He is above this in grace.

PSALM VI.

When the believing soul is under trial, the recurrence to God as its resource and hope is the natural movement of faith. Nor is there a sweeter time for the soul that trusts Him than the time of trial.

There is another case, where trial, though ever salutary and gracious, has another element in it which makes confiding love to God more

difficult. I mean where the trial has its source in the conduct of the person suffering.

If I have brought trial on myself by sin, how difficult to see love in it! how difficult not to groan in the consciousness that it is the fruit of sin and just rebuke for it, and hence that we have no right to think of love in it! Yet where can we turn but to Him?

God is trusted with a humble heart in spite of all.

The heart can plead its extreme sorrow and trial with a God whose compassions are known. The last three verses express this confidence fully.

When the believer has peace he looks at discipline, even when justly severe, in the sense of certain divine favour. Hence his horror of sin is of a much purer kind, for it *abhors* the sin and not its consequences.

PSALM VII.

I cannot give the Psalm as presenting anything of the experience of the Christian, save the consciousness of integrity and the fact of trusting God.

It is for those who are in the distress produced by the haughty wicked, and look for deliverance, that the psalm provides an expression of feeling.

PSALM VIII.

Is the celebration of Jehovah's millennial

dominion. The psalm gives us a most interesting in sight into the glory of Christ,and, as far as is possible in the Old Testament, our association with Him.

What is man? Christ is the answer.

As a mere creature, man is small and feeble. But the Man of God's counsel, the second Adam, is over all. See Proverbs viii.

PSALM IX., X.

The former celebrating the judgment of the enemies of Israel, the latter descriptive of the wickedness of their oppressors.

They express the consciousness during the oppression that God does see it, and does not forget the humble; and then, on the deliverance, they celebrate the faithfulness of Jehovah.

PSALM XI.

Sees distinctly that there is no hope from, no reliance on, man on the earth. That nothing earthly is stable, amd that evil has brought in ruin. The question put in the psalm is: If the foundation be cast down, what can the righteous do?

The righteous may leave his cause to Him.

Jehovah tries the righteous. When His eyelids, who sees all things according to His own purity, try the children of men, He has an *object* as regards the righteous; He proves *and sifts* them. This is a most important *truth.*

The breaking of the will is the great means of opening the understanding.

The love of God in the chastening itself leads to two conclusions, expressed in Hebrews xii.—not to despise the chastening, for there must be a reason for it in us if love does it; and not to faint, because it is love which does it.

Job gives us full divine instructions as to God's ways in trying the righteous. There we learn another truth, important to exercised souls, who often dwell on secondary causes—that God is the cause, and moves in all these exercises. The origin of all Job's trials was not Satan's accusation, but God's word, "Hast thou considered my servant Job?"

When the trial is met in the truth and power of spiritual life, it develops and brings out much more softness and maturity of grace—a spirit more separated from the world to God, and more acquainted with God. Where it is met by or meets the flesh, the will of this—its rebellion—is brought to light, the conscience becomes sensible of it before God, and, by the discipline itself, the self-will is, even insensibly destroyed.

God has a larger place in the heart, there is more intelligence in His ways, more lowly dependence, more consciousness that the world is nothing, more distrust of flesh and self.

What is eternal and true, because divine, has a much larger place in the soul; what is false

detected and set aside. There is more ripeness in our relationship with God. We dwell more in the eternal scenes into which He has brought our souls.

PSALM XII.

It is evident that it is written under the pressure of extreme wrong and violence and the feeling of being isolated.

It is rare to have occasion to suffer as here described.

But it may come.

Verse 5 introduces Jehovah's judgments which will put an end to it. This He often does still in His government, but it is not the direct proper hope of the Christian. For him to do well, suffer for it and take it patiently, is acceptable with God. His rest is elsewhere.

In many cases of detail, deliverance, if we wait patiently for it, comes even here.

At any rate, and this is the point of the psalm, the words of Jehovah are pure words. Our wisdom is to hold fast by the word of the Lord, come what will. The word is the test of all for the soul. We shall surely live by it.

PSALM XIII.

Continues the expression of the workings of a soul under the trials we have seen referred to in Psalm x.

Not only in the midst of heartless and conscienceless enemies, but apparently forgotten of God, the soul trusts in His mercy, counts on Himself in goodness and faithfulness of mercy, so as to rejoice in deliverance by His power before it comes.

The taking counsel in the heart is very natural, but not faith. It wears and distresses the spirit. The sorrow tends to work death. The soul, even though submitting, preys on itself; it is turning to the Lord which lightens the soul.

The consciousness that it is the enemy who works against us helps the soul to confidence.

PSALM XIV.

Is an eminent example of a principle of very frequent application: how psalms, or other passages of scripture, clearly applicable literally to the Jews in the last days, and to events then occurring, are used as great principles deciding morally on important truths at all times.

The apostle [Paul] applies this psalm as the expression of the divine judgment on the state of the Jews, as declared in their own scriptures, and proving the need of a righteousness not their own.

We may expect to meet with difficulties which arise from a total absence of the fear of God in those with whom we have to do. But we must expect this sometimes, where we should least expect it.

THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD.

(EPH. VI.)

PAGES 378–406.

The Epistle to the Ephesians has a peculiar character. It treats man as *dead* in trespasses and sins.

Hence his whole moral existence is a new one. It has its origin and subsistence from His [God's] creative and life-giving energies. It is a new creation.

By following the word of God the simplest soul avoids danger, though it may be inexperienced in the devices of the enemy; for in that path God is found, and all is simple.

It will be remarked that the spiritual use of the armour is found at the close of an epistle in which all the highest spiritual privileges have been spoken of as the portion of a Christian.

Hence, when the apostle treats of warfare, it is not carried on in order to enter into these privileges, but in order to maintain oneself in them, and to realise them by the power of God.

As soon as Israel had crossed the Jordan, before a blow was struck, they ate of the old corn of the land. They were, as to title, in full possession of the country. But to possess it actually they must combat with the enemy.

The principle of the christian warfare is the same.

There is no safeguard but the armour of God; and to maintain one's ground continually all the pieces of it are needed. What should we say of one who, armed in every other point, forgot his helmet or his sword.

The first thing is that we remember, that the armour is that of God; that no human power, no wisdom, is of any avail. Satan's weapons or wiles go clean through them at once. The use of such weapons is the foolishness of confidence in self, which is (witness Peter's case) exactly what exposes us to him.

Remark further, it is not in the time of the combat, in the evil day, I am to put on my armour. I enter into it armed, at least if I enter into it aright, and in the way to be victorious. The armour we wear is our abiding state as regards this world; though with God all be peace.

It is not the force and power of Satan which we have to resist, but his wiles. When really resisted, he has no force against us, for he is overcome by Christ; and the new nature he has nothing in or for.

TRUTH.

The first part then of our armour is to have the loins girt about with *truth*. The word first girds about my own loins, before I can use it

as a sword. The girding about the loins is that strengthening and giving of firmness to the whole man.

It is the application to the heart and conscience of all that is revealed in Christ.

The girding about the loins with *truth* then is the application of *truth* to the affections, so that a man is braced up. (See Heb. iv.; John xvii.)

In heaven this will not be needed. The flesh will not be there. All that attracts will be divine. We can let ourselves freely go to it. There is nothing to watch and guard against. We can let out all our affections there. The more we have, the better.

Here we must have our loins girt about with *truth*, in a world of dissolution.

RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Christ is our *righteousness* before God, perfect and unchangeable; and without that we could in no way make head against Satan; but it cannot assume the character of a breastplate, when we consider it as our *righteousness* before God.

But in my conflict with Satan, while I cannot do without this, I need something else—*practical righteousness.* My conscience must be without reproach, in order to combat with him. A conscience practically bad will make me weak before the enemy.

How can he, whose conscience reproaches ıim, whom the world could reproach if aware of t, how can he go boldly into the combat? He s afraid the blow may reach him there; he is ›bliged to think of that: he is not free to think, ı simplicity of heart, of nothing, but the service ·hich is before him.

The Spirit of God also is grieved, and lets im, if he goes on thus carelessly, feel that he as failed, as Israel before Ai.

A good conscience *against Satan* is only ·hen the Spirit has not been grieved by anyıing done contrary to the light He has afforded ıe.

But many have not the courage to go on in God's warfare, because they hold to something vhich is inconsistent with the light they have eceived. Perhaps, alas! they lose the light vhich they have not acted up to.

The existence of the flesh in us, though udged as sin, does not give a bad conscience, ıor interrupt communion; but the moment it s allowed, even in mind, it does both.

There are two ways, very distinct indeed in heir character in which I may fail in communion; one negatively, where negligence has leprived me of positive and sensible intercourse vith God, the heart being cold and indifferent; he other, where the conscience is concerned, ınd, the heart *having* allowed the enemy to

prevail against it, the Holy Ghost becomes in us a stern reprover; while never destroying the sense of God's love.

[The Holy Ghost] makes us bitterly bewail the loss of the inward sense and enjoyment of it [communion], and makes us taste, more or less, the fruits of sin, as, in its nature, separating the soul from God; and thus makes it horrible to us.

But this last is an extreme case, and discipline on God's part, and very severe discipline, too. The other, alas! is but too common. They are very different.

PEACE.

When the heart is full of *peace*, and enjoys unsuspecting sweetness of it with God, it walks in the spirit of *peace*. This *peace* characterizes all its ways and relationships with others. There is no effort or restraint, nothing to guard or to keep back. The course is natural, unconstrained and unsuspecting. There is not fear of evil, because there is not the consciousness of it.

In this *peace* the heart depends on God; and, as above evil in this sense, it brings *peace* with it into the scene through which it passes.

The expression, having the feet shod with it, is beautiful, as shewing the habitual character of the walk. Such was the character, especially, of Christ.

(To be continued.)

THE FATHER'S LOVE.

1879.

Vritten in Pau, 1879, when the thoughts of Hymns addressed to "The Father," were much present to Mr. Darby's mind.)

Blest Father! infinite in grace:
  Source of eternal joy!
Thou lead'st our hearts to that blest place,
  Where's rest without alloy.

There will Thy love find perfect rest,
  Where all around is bliss;
Where, all in Thee supremely blest,
  Thy praise their service is!

Eternal love their portion is,
  Where love has found its rest;
And, filled with Thee, the constant mind
  Eternally is blest!

There, Christ, the centre of the throng,
  Shall in His glory shine;
But not an eye, those hosts among,
  But see that glory—Thine

Thy counsels, too, in all Thine own
  Fulfill'd, by power divine,
Spread wide the glory of Thy throne,
  Where all in glory shine.

Yet deeper, if a calmer joy,
  The Father's love shall raise;
And every heart find sweet employ
  In His eternal praise!

Nor is its sweetness now unknown,
  Well proved in what it's done;
Our Father's love in joy we own,
  Reveal'd in Christ the Son!

It is a significant fact, acted on generally and admitted, that ıe hymns of the late beloved J. N. D. express more accurately ıd adequately than any others, the full position and privileges both the individual saint and the church of God, and especially our owship with the Father and His Son, and all it involves.—[ED.]

PSALM XV.

The direct application is to the Jews in the last days. Verse 4 gives what, in principle, pleases the Lord at all times.

PSALM XVI.

Applies directly to Christ, but in which we shall find the sweetest instruction also for ourselves. It is essentially Christ taking the place of a man, and pointing out the path of life before Him through death, since He came for us, but trusting in Jehovah, into His presence, where is fulness of joy.

The great principle proposed in the psalm is trust in the Lord, even in death—the place of dependent obedience.

The subjective state of soul is brought out before us here, and that in Christ Himself. And note here, it is His perfection as man, and before God and towards God. It is not divine perfection, God manifested to man, but what He was as man dependent on God.

It depicts His place as the dependent devoted Man.

"My goodness extendeth not to thee"—taking His place entirely as a man here, the Lord shews us the true place of man living *to* God . . . . dependent, obedient, taking no *place with* God, but before Him as responsible *man upon* earth. It is man trusting God.

deriving His pleasure and joy from God, living by faith, and in that sense apart from Him. This is our place on earth.

The state described in this psalm is that of man considered apart from God. But it is man partaker of the divine nature, entirely dependent on God, and perfect in faith in Him.

The divine presence in Him is viewed, not in the manifestation of God in Him, but in its effect in His absolute perfection as man.

He [Christ] used and acted on and obeyed the scriptures as man.

He had taken the form of a servant—freely taken, perfectly preserved in, through death, His taken place through humiliation. Freely to take it is a divine title and action. Creatures have to keep their own; though, when not kept by God, none have done so.

Nature has circumstances between itself and God; faith has God between the heart and circumstances. And what a difference!

No peace like the peace, which hiding in the tabernacle from the provokings of all men gives. But this is a divine life through the world.

For the securing infallibly happiness and peace we need not look to circumstances, save to pass through them with Him. This was *perfect in Christ.*

I here remark a distinct characteristic of this

psalm. It touches on no circumstances, though it supposes them. It is divine life with God. The psalm is man living through, with, and in view of God in this world, and so enjoying Him for ever in spite of death. Circumstances are but circumstances, and not the subject of the psalm.

It is important to remember, that there is an inward divine life which dwells and joys in God, having nothing to do with circumstances, though enabling us to go through them, and *in us* helped by them, because annulling the flesh and the will, so that we live more entirely of the inward life with God.

The lines fallen in pleasant places I believe to be His joy as man in God, and in what was before God. There is the immense privilege of the positive direction and guidance of God, the interest He feels in guiding the godly man aright, in the true path, suited to God Himself, across the wilderness where there is no way. God can make a new way, if He gives a new life, with a new object to that life. Himself as known in heaven.

That to which the Christian has to give much heed, is that he neglect not the holy suggestions and conclusions of the divinely instructed life when freed from the influence of surrounding circumstances. It may seem folly, but, if found in humbly waiting on God, will in *the end* prove His wisdom.

There is nothing in this world like the dignity of a man always walking with God.

Self-exaltation is neither possible nor desired in the presence and enjoyment of God.

What absence of self, what renouncement of all will, what singleness of eye, and hence bright and earnest activity of purpose, when the Lord is the only object and end! I say the Lord, for no other such object can command and sanctify the heart.

What path of the new divine life in man could there be for man in a world of sin, amongst men already departed from God.

Christ, as the psalm shews us, lived the life of faith, and never of anything but faith; and this was His perfection. In this world there is no other for a man, a life which has no object but the Lord Himself. This is a wonderful point—not one object in the world at all.

It is man's life, living wholly for and towards God in a world departed from Him—hence, towards Him and by faith; for it is not merely that they serve in it. *That* angels can do.

This psalm gives us the inward spiritual life of Christ, and so ours, ending in the highest joy of God's presence.

PSALM XVII.

Considers this life practically here below, and in respect to its difficulties with man opposed to

what is right. The state of the soul is still marked by *entire* dependence on God, but, as to integrity towards God, and as against man, the soul can plead righteousness.

This is a great secret of practical wisdom—not avenging self—the patience of the new life in the midst of evil, and looking, and leaving all to God.

Faith sees that the men of this world are the men of God's hand. They serve to prove the heart, and, in us who are ever in danger to slip into the world, to keep us strangers in it. Still God delivers from them.

Faithfulness, internal and external, to God in the midst of an opposing and perhaps oppressing world, leads to righteous recompense of glory and God's presence in righteousness. Both are perfect in Christ, and through Christ, the portion of the saints.

PSALM XVIII.

Is of the deepest interest, as regards the interpretation, presenting as it does the sufferings of Christ as the centre of all deliverance of Israel.

The great principle developed—and it is a precious one—is the cry to a trusted God in distress, which He surely hears. Of this Christ *is the example*, as elsewhere.

The interest and sympathy of God, awaken-

ng in us the blessedest affections, are sweetly hewn.

The psalm instructs us thus to call upon the ord in distress, come how or why it may, o call on the Lord; and thus not only the leliverance is known, but the Lord is known n His sympathy, and kindness, and interest n us.

He cannot bear to see us suffer, save when eeded, and there are trials which draw out ove to Him.

PSALM XIX.

First, there is the testimony of creation, and n particular the heavens, for the earth has een given to man and is corrupt.

The godly man can delight in this testimony o the glory of his God; but he sees it reaches ut to all. He enters into and understands the enetrating, pervading character of this testinony, and that it is God who is witnessed to y it.

In keeping His judgments there is great eward, great positive blessing and peace of eart here.

There is integrity and confidence in the ord, and he demands to be cleansed from ecret faults, and to be kept from all presumpious faults—what one would commit with open sregard of God.

Finally, the true desire of the heart is shew that the words of the mouth, and the medi tions of the heart, may be acceptable in Go sight. This is the true test of a godly life.

PSALMS XX., XXI.

Shew us the profound interest which the he takes in watching the faithful One in H sorrows—in a Jewish form, no doubt; still, elsewhere, the substance is the same for us.

The Anointed is saved, that is, delivered a heard. The whole heart of the godly is wrapp up in this.

PSALM XXII.

In commenting on Psalm xxii. our part he is not to unfold the blessed doctrine contain in it, but rather to pursue the feelings a thoughts of Christ. For the piety of this p of the Psalms is the piety of Christ Hims Nor is anything more instructive or sanctifyi Nothing deepens our own piety so much. Th then, shall be our subject now. The Lo enable us to tread reverently here!

We find what called out the special cry of t Saviour—a cry which, till that bitter cup h been fully drunk, could not be heard.

There is progress and completeness in t utterance of these sorrows. Violence, u restrained and full of rage, surrounded Him *bulls of* Bashan, ravening and roaring lions.

It was no haughty strength of man which net this. He must meet and feel it in the neekness of His nature, and know the weakness, though never the sin, of human nature, ave bearing it.

He was poured out like water. All His ones are out of joint. His heart melted like vax in the midst of His bowels. His strength s dried up like a potsherd: His tongue cleaves o His jaws. But here there is no stopping, or could He do so, at second causes. He is lown in the dust of death; but Jehovah has rought Him there. The point here is His tate, the dust of death: only He looks at the eal source of all, at the thoughts and counsels f Jehovah.

There was the manifestation of the character f men, when, through His own giving Himelf up, He was in their power. Dogs encompassed Him — creatures without heart or conscience — without shame or feeling, whose leasure was in the shame of another, and nsults offered to Him who made no resistance, n outrages to the righteous.

They were wicked as well as violent. They tared and looked upon Him. How must the Saviour have felt their shameless and heartless inults—His exposure, naked to the hardened eye of hose that rejoiced in iniquity and His shame! They amuse themselves with appropriating His arments. The vesture of the Innocent was

an affair of dice or casting lots. No eye to pity, none to help. Trouble was there: He looks on Jehovah, entreating Him not to be far from Him, and, if He has no strength, Jehovah as His strength to be near.

And here we approach the deeper part of this solemn hour. In the utmost trials from man, when no eye was there to pity, no hand to help, He looks to Jehovah. But here, O mystery of mysteries! there was no help either, but only infinite perfection (for infinite it now must be) in the Blessed One.

He is still here associated with Israel as to His place in the psalm, whatever the efficacy of that work, in this great turning-point of divine history, this central definition and solution of the question of good and evil, that in which it was settled for eternity.

There is the deepest consciousness of His own outwardly abject state and desertion, and that in painful contrast with every faithful soul —a circumstance wonderfully calculated to produce in the human heart irritation and despondency, that is, a forgetfulness of what God was, if this had been possible with Jesus. "I am a worm, and no man, a scorn of men, and despised of the people."

The blessed Saviour, He who had been cast upon Jehovah from the womb, whose hope *Jehovah* had been from His mother's breast,

.o had sought His will and glorified His me, had to declare before all, and in the ɛsence of the taunts and mockery of His adrsaries, that God had forsaken Him. How ep this trial was morally, none but He could l who passed through it. It was in the prortion of the love He enjoyed and lived in, d His faithfulness to it.

He says, "*My* God, my God." Whatever ɛ dreadful forsaking was, His perfect faith in ɔd and devotedness to God, as the only One e owned, remains absolute and unshaken. e is perfect, absolutely perfect, as man, subtively.

Remark that the first thought of Christ, when ard from the horns of the unicorn, is to deıre the name of God and His Father to His ethren—now glorious, but not ashamed to call brethren.

He raises the blessed note as man, and sings aise in the midst of the assembly. Oh, with ıat loud voices and ready hearts we ought to low Him! And note, he who is not clear in ceptance and joy of Sonship with God, in tue of redemption, cannot sing with Christ.

PSALM XXIII.

so ordered by the Spirit as to apply to a ing Christ, or a saint who follows in His otsteps, *or the* preserved remnant.

Its subject is, "Jehovah is my shepherd"—the constant unfailing care exercised by Him. It is a life spent under His care and eye, come what will, the experience it affords, and the assurance that Jehovah's love gives to the end and for ever. It is not what He gives which assures the heart, but Himself.

We have not to think of what may come, or what means may be employed. The Shepherd's care is our assurance.

The natural fruit of this care is fresh and green pastures in security, the peaceful enjoyment of the sure refreshings of goodness.

Christ was not, of course, a sheep, but He trod the path the sheep have to tread, and trusted in Jehovah. He is the Jehovah-Shepherd of them that are His. He loves us, as Jehovah loved and cared for Him. It is then the sure care of Jehovah through all that besets human nature in its path through this world.

Confidence is in Jehovah Himself; and therefore all circumstances, and the whole power of evil, and difficulties of mortal man included in them, are but occasions of Jehovah's power, interested, in infallible faithfulness, in carrying the faithful through.

PSALM XXIV.

When the earth is Jehovah's, who shall

ascend His hill, or stand in His holy place? Here, remark, the door has become open to all.

Blessing and acceptance in favour from God, who is their salvation, are the portion of every one that has purified himself to seek God.

Psalm xxiv. closes the whole series which speaks of the association of Christ with the excellent—the saints of the earth.

(To be continued.)

THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD.

(EPH. VI.)

FAITH.

PAGES 395–406.

Thus governed within, and walking in peace without, the soul is free to *trust* in God.

Faith is the full confidence in God, which counts on His goodness and faithfulness, and that He is for us—which trusts a God who is entirely for us. Without this all is despair, or near to it, in a conscience which feels that it has to do with God.

Satan has got in ; and to the soul which feels the need of God being for it there is left only the agonising feeling that He is not.

There is no pleasure in despair, but deep agony. The flesh finds its pleasure in satisfying

its lusts, but there is no lust of despair; it is a consuming fire in the soul.

The fiery darts of the enemy are the power of the enemy over the soul, when it has been left exposed to his inroads by the shield of faith having been down.

But, I would add, that I do not believe this is ever a simple case; that is, that it happened by itself, without some producing cause.

Where these [lusts] are in any degree wilfully indulged by one who is a Christian, it is well if the result be not this terrible power of Satan over the soul, which for a time at least darkens the light of God in it, and hides His favour; the knowledge of which only makes the loss of the sense of it more terrible to him who suffers under it: it seems to be gone for ever, at least it may reach this point. At any rate it is the most terrible chastisement which can reach a human heart.

If a soul belong to God, it will surely be delivered; but who can say how long it may suffer? The great remedy against such a danger is to have the soul frequently, in a positive way, in God's presence.

The case, blessed be God's grace, is as rare as it is terrible.

But something of an analogous nature takes *place, in* a different state of soul, as to what

is not infrequently called the fiery darts of the enemy. I refer to those cases where blasphemous and infidel thoughts seem to arise in the mind. They are not desired, not the effect of reasoning, but present themselves unsought, to the great distress of the soul. But this, I believe, happens when the soul is not set free in Christ. When once we are really introduced into the presence of God, in the knowledge of His favour and love—are there before Him, enjoying Himself—Satan cannot get there, cannot thus reach the mind.

The shield of *faith* then is that entire confidence in God, flowing from the real personal knowledge of redemption, which silences every doubt and prevents every question.

Entire unwavering confidence in God Himself is the spring then and source of energy; the efforts of Satan to break or enfeeble it are quenched by the shield of *faith.*

SALVATION.

Confidence is dependence, a blessed, right, and softening feeling; *salvation* gives boldness and energy: we hold up the head, so to speak, a head covered by the strength and *salvation* of God Himself.

Would to God, says Paul, that not only thou but all that hear me, were not only almost, but altogether, such as I am save these bonds. Was he - after two years' imprisonment and

wrong, in the presence of judges, as a chained prisoner, without resource save in God—was he disheartened or fearful in spirit? The helmet of a known *salvation* was on his head.

Salvation was a helmet to his head: he could lift it up before all. Nor is it less such to us in the day of battle.

THE WORD OF GOD.

When fully in the power of our relationship with God, we can take the sword of the Spirit which is *His word.* If the soul be not in communion with God, it cannot wield *His word* in His name.

It is not a carnal weapon to be used with carnal force or wisdom. It is the Spirit's sword: sharp, reaching the conscience, and of the most hardened when rightly applied, and bowing and subduing the most haughty. But if the soul be not with God there is not the thought of the right passage, nor the power of God with it.

See the Lord's use of scripture, as an example—ever matchless—of this weapon. How were His adversaries put to silence, no man daring to put Him any more questions. How was Satan himself reduced to leave One whom he could not touch!

For this weapon repels all the attacks of Satan, as it confounds by its power all the

: and wiles of the enemy. We have no r weapon; we must have skill to use it, :h no practice but the power of present e can give; but it is the weapon of God's mind, and light, and truth, in the midst of darkness by which Satan would overcloud 's mind.

he armour of God, then, begins with all g inwardly right in affection; then in tice; then peacefulness of walk; then rity, by unfailing confidence, from Satan's :ks, the joy and power of salvation before ; and finally, the active energy in which :an use *the word* in all; and behind all, ndence exercised in prayer.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

(1 JOHN IV. 9.)

PAGES 407–415.

'e find that God is dealing with men rding to everything that He is in Himself :aling with their hearts and consciences by ɜnting to them all that He is, and we know He is holy, righteous, and *love*.

Without holiness no man shall see the l." This shews the necessity of separation evil.

'hatever your state may be, God is perfect

in His *love*, and He would make us enjoy and walk in it now. It is not in heaven we shall learn it. To enjoy it I must learn it here, or could not have the enjoyment of it there.

Our nature, selfishness, and unbelief hinder down here: still they, after all, only magnify the grace that exercises *love* in spite of all, He will bring us to the knowledge of perfect *love*. "Perfect *love* casteth out fear for fear hath torment," &c. It may be very reasonable that it should be so, but still it is torment.

Where God awakens the conscience, it is always to teach something about His goodness. As in the prodigal son, &c., whatever may be the character of the alarm, the reason for it is in God Himself, and God would have us know it.

If I could get pardon from any other source than God, I do not learn His *love*. For instance, if I seek peace in ordinances it is not *love* but fear. The effect of true ministry is to put the soul in direct contact with God. False ministry is the bringing in of something between the soul and God.

You will discern what is of God from what is not of God by this test, that it turns to God. There having been a revelation of God to the soul, it can never get rest until received from God. Until then there is no rest.

"Herein is *love*, not that we loved God, but

that he *loved* us." I must have the new nature first to know this, and the soul is brought into the perfect light and joy of it without a cloud, daily and hourly finding the joy in which we can go on in the grace He has towards us. Where is this found? In Jesus Christ Himself.

The sinner is *loved* when He does not love God. It is the sinner's need that draws out *His love.*

He is "a propitiation for our sins." Ah! now I can see, when I believe that. In Him, in His death, is the ground of my rest. Therein I learn what *love* is towards such a sinner as I am.

My soul rests there. The cloud is taken away for ever. God has given His Son.

My soul rests in *His love.* And now I have communion.

God's *love* was manifested to us in His sending His Son, that we might have life and atonement; now it is perfected that we might have boldness in the day of judgment.

"There is no fear in *love.*" It is a matter of communion. "Perfect love casteth out fear."

"We *love* him because he first *loved* us."

And you who would come to Him must come just as you are.

DIVINE PERFECTNESS OF LOVE.

(1 JOHN IV. 17.)

PAGES 416–422.

God's *love* in contrast to man's *love* is distinguished by this, that while man must have something to draw out his love, as it is said, "For a good man some would even dare to die; but God commended *his love* toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." *God's love* is without motive, there being nothing attractive in the object that draws it out. "In due time Christ died for the ungoldly," God's *love* sees no good in us.

The world has a character of a benefactor, and that it sometimes gives generously I do not deny, but then it is by helping a man, as he is, out of the resources which it has, which may be all very well, because by helping him it is only taking care of itself; but it is evidently a different thing here, for Christ takes us clean out of our condition, putting us in the same relationship with the Father as Himself.

"The glory thou hast given me, I have given them, that the world may know that thou hast *loved* them as thou hast *loved* me." Jesus not only *loves* them Himself, but He will have it known by the world, that they are *loved* by the Father, as He Himself is loved. Can *there* be anything more disinterested than this?

(Though the word disinterested fails to give the full meaning.)

The more a saint enters into his elevation as being brought into the same place with Christ, the more he adores Christ as God over all, blessed for evermore.

Love is the most difficult thing for our hearts to enter into, but the Lord would have our hearts enjoying it.

There is nothing more comforting than the perfect confidence of having God as my Father. I cannot get the affections in full play if I think God is going to judge me.

Therefore boldness is needed for the exercise of spiritual affections in me. And we ought to remember this, for Christians often shrink from it.

There is a great difference between spiritual desires and spiritual affections, though both have the same root. Spiritual desires, if the relationship which would meet them be not known, only produce sorrow. Take an orphan, for instance, in a family where the parents' *love* to the children is witnessed every day; the sorrowful experience would be, Oh, that I had a father!

The child who has its parents has the same desires, but the relationship exists of parent and child, and it knows the joy and gladness. As

the children of God we must have the conscio ness of the relationship in which we stand God. I would notice the defectiveness of so hymns, which call Christ our brother. \ never find in scripture that Christ is called c brother. In the fulness of His grace He not ashamed to call us brethren. My Fathe a man, but I do not call him a man. It wo shew a want of filial reverence in me if I did.

A common expression is, We cannot alwa be on the mount. So far this is true, but would observe, that being in the mount of Go presence always humbles, though when a sa gets down again he may be proud of havi been there.

Paul was not puffed up when he was in Go presence, caught up to the third heavens; b after he had been there, he needed a thorn the flesh lest he should be exalted abc measure. The heart is never proud in Go presence, and, only when it is really there, is really in its right place, for when out of it t flesh turns everything into mischief.

"As he is, so are we," not only in the sa standing and acceptance as Christ, but broug by the communication of His life into the sa relationship as Himself.

In all my sins and follies I can look to H who gave His Son for me.

THE CAPACITY FOR KNOWING DIVINE LOVE,

AND HOW WE KNOW IT.

(1 JOHN IV. 7–19.)

PAGES 423–429.

There are two subjects in these verses—the capacity for knowing *divine love* and the manifestation or proof of it, or more generally how we know it.

Righteousness and *love* are the two great characteristic traits of the divine life, but the latter is what God is. I do not say God is righteousness, though He is righteous; but I do say He is *love*. Righteousness refers to others. *Love* is what He is in Himself.

If we have the elements of this nature (God's) as ours, we are clearly born of God and know Him.

We *love* for, He *loves*. He has given us of His Spirit.

Our being partakers, then, of the divine nature and God dwelling in us form our capacity for enjoying God in love.

I turn now to those things in which that *love* is manifested and proved. First we have verses 9 and 10.

He sent His only-begotten Son into the world that *we might* live through Him. I was

dead then—I live through another. I was dead. But God gave the one blessed object of His undistracted, undisturbed *love*—His only-begotten Son—for me when I was dead. Herein, then, was *love*, not that we loved God, but that He *loved* us.

Love was manifested to us in that He came to us in *love* when we were in our sins. It was perfected in that, as Christ is, so are we. We can say, "in this world," for it is here that we learn to know we are in Him.

How can I have but boldness in the day of judgment, when I am as the judge before whom I appear?

And so it is with us. He comes and fetches us Himself, and changes our bodies into glorious bodies by the way; so that, when we appear before Him, we are like Himself in glory.

It is said, "No man hath seen God at any time." (Ver. 12.) What is the remedy for this seeming impossibility of knowing Him? The answer here is, If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His *love* is perfected in us. Here is a wonderful way of knowing God, of enjoying in a most perfect way His *love*. How great is the intimacy when He dwells in us and gives us to feel immediately the sweetness of His present *love*.

We know it because it is communicated, and *God is* nearer to us than any other object in

ıe world. IIe dwells in us. Wonderful place iven to us.

Do you confess that Jesus is the Son of God? ;od dwells in you then. How are you treating uch a question?

WHAT IS DEATH?

PAGES 431–437.

For the unbeliever nothing can be more :rrible than *death.* It is justly and scripturally ılled the "king of terrors." It is the judicial .ose of the being of the first Adam. What is eyond?

It is not merely so for the animal nature, ıough that be true, but the more it is con- dered in connection with man's moral nature, ıe more terrible does it become.

Everything in which man has his home, his ıoughts, his whole being employed, is closed nd perishes for ever: "When his breath goeth ›rth, all his thoughts perish." Man finds in it n end to every hope, every project, to all his ıoughts and plans. The spring of them all is roken.

The being in which he moved is gone: he ın count upon nothing more. The busy scene ı which his whole life has been, knows him no ıore. He himself fails and is extinct. None ave to do *with him* any more as belonging to

it. His nature has given way, powerless to resist this master to which it belongs, and who now asserts his dreadful rights. But this is far from being all.

Man indeed, as alive in this world, sinks down into nothing. But why? Sin has come in; with sin, conscience; with sin, Satan's power: still more, with sin, God's judgment. *Death* is the expression and witness of all this. It is the wages of sin, terror to the conscience, Satan's power over us, for he has the power of *death*. Can God help there? Alas! it is His own judgment on sin.

Death seems but as the proof that sin does not pass unnoticed, and it is the terror and plague of the conscience as witness of God's judgment. The officer of justice to the criminal, and the proof of his guilt, is the presence of coming judgment. How can it but be terrible?

But Christ has come in. He has come into *death*—O wondrous truth—the Prince of life! What is *death* now for the believer? It has, as a terror to the soul, in every sense, wholly lost its power for the believer. The physical fact may take place; for so wholly has Christ put away its power that that is not necessarily the case. We shall not all sleep, though we shall all be changed. Desiring, says the apostle, not to "be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality may be swallowed up of life," such is *the power* of life in Christ.

But *death* has much more than passed away. *Death* is ours, says the apostle, as all things re. By the blessed Lord's entering into it for ıe, *death*, and judgment too, is become my alvation.

Death is not terror to my soul; it is not ıe sign of anger, but the blessedest and fullest roof of love, because Christ came into it.

Death has freed me for ever from everything ıat belonged to, and awaited, the old man, s alive.

Condemnation and judgment are entirely over s a question of the soul's acceptance.

It is never said that we are to die to sin. 'he old man does not and would not; the new ıan has no sin to die to. We are said to be *'ead* and commanded to reckon ourselves *dead*. Rom. vi. 11; Col. iii. 3.)

What a gain *death* is to me in this respect, if eally the desires of the new man are in me! 'ea, what deliverance and power!

For faith, we are *dead*, not alive, in the world. Hence, also, everything which practically makes s realize this—trial, suffering, sorrow—is gain.

If *death* comes in fact, the *death* of what?)f what is mortal, of the old man. Does the ew risen life die? It has passed through eath in Christ, and this has been realized in s. It cannot die. It is Christ. It quits what ; mortal.

It was previously outwardly connected with what is mortal; it is no longer so. We are absent from the body, present with the Lord. We depart and are with Christ.

Meanwhile death itself is always deliverance, because, having a new life, it is our being disencumbered from the old man which hinders and hems our way. It is our being with Christ. How sweet and refreshing is the thought! No doubt, God's time is best, because He alone knows what is needed in the way of discipline and exercise to form our souls for Himself.

But if death is the ceasing of the old man, it is but the ceasing of sin, hindrance, and trouble.

As actual mortality, it is deliverance from it to be with Christ in the new man which enjoys Him. Who as to the proper gain of it would not die?

If we live to serve Christ, the sorrow of this world is worth while; but it is not the less sorrow in itself, whatever blessing may cheer us through it. To us to live, is Christ; to die, gain.

It is but the old man that dies; our misery first, our enemy afterwards. Of course, this supposes divine life, and in practice the heart to be elsewhere than in the things the old man lives in.

THE FATHER'S GRACE.

1879.

ritten in Pau, 1879. when the thoughts of Hymns addressed to "The Father" were much present to Mr. Darby's mind.)

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is Hymn was written for an invalid who was in great suffering.)

FATHER ! in Thine eternal power,
Thy grace and majesty divine:
No soul, in this weak mortal hour,
Can grasp the glory that is Thine!

E'en in its thoughts of sovereign grace,
It leaves us all far, far behind ;
The love that gives with Christ a place,
Surpasses our poor feeble mind!

And yet, that love is not unknown
To those who have the Saviour seen ;
Nor strange to those He calls His own,
Pilgrims in scenes where He has been.

In Him, Thy perfect love revealed,
Has led our hearts to love that trace
Where nothing of that love's concealed,
But meets us, in our lowly place!

But grace, the source of all our hope,
From Thine eternal nature flows :
Could to our lost condition stoop,
And now, through Christ, no hindrance knows.

Has flowed in fullest streams below,
And opened to our hearts the place,
Where, in its ripened fruits, we'll know
The eternal blessings of that grace!

And here we walk, as sons, through grace,
  A Father's love our present joy;
Sons, in the brightness of Thy Face,
  Find rest, no sorrows can destroy!

Nor is the comfort of Thy love,
  In which we "Abba Father" cry,
The only blessing that we prove;
  Because that love is ever nigh:

A holy Father's constant care
  Keeps watch, with an unwearying eye,
To see what fruits His children bear,
  Fruits that may suit their calling high;

Takes ever knowledge of our state,
  What dims communion with His love,
Might check our growth, or separate
  Our hearts from what's reveal'd above.

Oh, wondrous Love! that ne'er forgets
  The objects of its tender care!
May chasten still, while sin besets,
  To warn and guard them where they are.

But ne'er forgets, but feeds them still
  With tokens of His tender love;
Will keep, till, freed from every ill,
  They find their rest with Him above!

Oh! wondrous, infinite, divine!
  Keep near, my soul, to that blest place,
Where all those heavenly glories shine,
  Which suit the brightness of His face!

O lowliness, how feebly known,
  That meets the grace that gave the Son!
That waits, to serve Him as His own
  Till grace, what grace began, shall crown!

It is a significant fact, acted on generally and admitte the hymns of the late beloved J. N. D. express more acc and adequately than any others, the full position and privileg *of the individual* saint and the church of God, and especia *fellowship* with the Father and His Son, and all it involves.—

PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE PSALMS.

PSALM XXV.

In Psalm xxv. we have, for the first time, the definite confession of sin.

The more we study the Psalms, the more we shall see that they apply properly to the Jews, and that almost universally; referring to the godly righteous man of the remnant, animated *according to his position*, whose thoughts are furnished by the Spirit of Christ speaking in the prophet.

Many parts of them can be applied to Christ Himself, when all cannot. But this shews what I have already remarked, that the possibility of referring passages to Christ does not make them exclusively prophecies of Him, nor prove that all the psalm applies to Him; and, further, the real danger of taking the Psalms as the expression of christian piety. They are not so. Often they furnish blessed instruction on confidence in God; but he who would take the form of his piety from the Psalms as a whole would falsify Christianity. Having said this, I turn to details.

The soul is lifted up to Jehovah in its difficulties—the true secret of overcoming them,

and of having peace in the midst of them. The true heart has no other refuge. *Another distracts it from this.* It says, my God in them —it can now through Christ, and trust in God; and looks not to be ashamed, nor its enemies to triumph over it. This in difficulties is the first desire of faith.

The Christian cannot desire that an individual enemy come under judgment; but he does desire that evil be set aside, and that the adversaries of good be made ashamed. He loves and desires righteousness, and that the oppressor of righteousness, and of the lowly and meek and just be put down, and put to shame.

His trust in Jehovah prevents his taking the smallest step for the injury of his enemy; but he refers his case to Jehovah, and leaves it in His hands, looking for His deliverance.

Remark this very definite character of good in the upright soul. It is not simply a right way, but Jehovah's way he seeks.

The man who is guided in judgment will know what is right and do it, and avoid what is wrong.

The secret of Jehovah (for He has a secret for the ears of those who hear) is with them that fear Him—His friends to whom He makes known His mind. Is it wonderful that Mary *knew more* of it than Martha? She could

oint Him beforehand for His burial—had
: Lord's mind in the scene which was before.

PSALM XXVI.

the consciousness of integrity rather than the
ıfession of sins.

All refers to Jehovah, and draws from what
ıovah is and the attachment of the soul to
.m the principle of separation from evildoers,
d final joy in His congregation when there
ıll be full deliverance from them.

The spirit of the psalm is that integrity
ıich has kept the soul by its own affections.

PSALM XXVII.

ıews the heart confident in Jehovah, yet
ercised before Him in the presence of *outward*
anifestations of evil. What would create fear
ore than distress of spirit.

So Christ sweat, as it were, great drops of
ood in exercise of soul before God, and was of
:rfect calmness in the presence of His enemies,
:a, they fell to the ground at the mention of
is name. This is full of instruction as to the
fficulties and pains of the christian life.

The evil itself, whatever its power, is power-
ss when it comes, assuming the exercise to be
ımplete.

The *soul dwells* with Him, and dwells in

safety. There seems no resource; the soul seeks none, it confides sweetly and quietly in Jehovah, sure of security in Him.

It is remarkable how entirely absent is the thought of any other resource or help than that of Jehovah.

With Him all is settled. The enemies are then Jehovah's concern.

PSALM XXVIII.

Though Jehovah be the great subject as regards the faithful, there is a special point—his *cry* to Jehovah, and the supplication addressed to Him.

The *cry* implies Jehovah's interest in us, and our having this for our starting-point; also our avowed dependence on Him. Hence crying and prayer to the Lord are important, and an index to the state of the soul.

The heart was attached to Him, adored Him, looked up to Him, believed Him, and He has not failed us. Oh! true this is! and how it attaches afresh the heart to Him. (Vers. 6, 7.)

It appreciates Jehovah; and he who appreciates anything morally excellent is in a dependent way like it.

PSALM XXIX.

Is a summons to the mighty of the earth to

wn and give glory to Jehovah—the honour ue to His name.

Jehovah sitteth upon the floods, is above, nd rules to His own purposes all the tumultous movings of the mass of peoples. He sits oo king for ever.

Then there is the connection with His people. Ie gives them strength; He blesses them ith peace.

PSALM XXX.

The great truth of this psalm is the practically nteresting one, that the joy flowing from the eliverance the Lord affords is greater and eeper than the blessing of prosperity, even hen acknowledged to come from God.

It may be that the deliverance is from sorrow ccasioned by faults. With the remnant of ews it surely will be so; but it is complete nd full; and when the sin or evil is fully cknowledged, the restoration and blessing is bsolute in communion with God.

When the soul is healed, it will learn judgnent of the evil assuredly, and a sense of umbleness, if it be recurred to—always more enderness of spirit, more grace; but if the ealing be full, the soul wholly searched out, o *regrets*, because what God, as such, is for us, vill possess the soul.

The soul will abhor the flesh, and the prin-

ciples which led to evil; but self will be taken out of the abhorrence when the evil is really hated, and peace will be there.

CONDITIONS OF SOUL.

Firstly, what we may call in a comparative sense innocence, when a converted soul has no acquaintance with corruption and no great inward conflict. Here the grace of forgiveness is enjoyed, and the soul is cheerfully happy in the known kindness and love of God its Saviour.

Secondly, is where it has failed, and, gone through deeper exercises, has been brought thus to the knowledge of self in a humbling way. This is more the case of the psalm.

Thirdly, when the root that has produced the evil is really judged, the point of departure from God (not merely the evil itself), and self thus set aside practically, then divine favour is everything.

PSALM XXXI.

Is the expression of entire confidence in Jehovah—God known in our relationship with Him, in the most terrible circumstances of trial and distress, and that where sin has brought it on; yet where faith is at work, the known name of God is counted on, and therefore His righteousness in making it good.

The special character of the psalm is trust,

ıd, from personal knowledge of Jehovah, the ɔmmitting one's case to Him.

It is not every one that has to pass through ıch sorrows as those referred to here; but, hen it is the portion of the saint, it gives great timacy and confidence.

PSALM XXXII.

In the midst of all the exercises of heart hich belong to a renewed soul, in the midst of s difficulties here below, there is one point hich is the centre of all, a need to which n answer is craved, alike by the heart and ɔnscience—its relationship to God, when it ıinks of its sin before Him.

It needs reconciliation with Himself above ll, the unclouded light of His countenance; s regards its own state, forgiveness, and the bsence of guilt.

The entire removal of all guilt before God, nd His complete forgiveness, is beautifully onnected here with purifying the heart and ıner man, the taking out guile, and this in he confession of actual sins. . . . "Blessed is the ıan whose transgression is forgiven." He ıas sinned against God—transgressed. It is ll perfectly forgiven.

The psalm then is the expression of conscious ılessedness in the sense of being forgiven. . . . Then *there is the* consciousness of the sin,

being out of God's sight. This is a very g
blessing indeed, and the consciousness c
most sweet — the thought that not one
appears in the sight of God.

The sin is not denied; that would be gui

We have to go through a wilderness in w
there is no way; and, in the midst of sn
and dangers of false ways, God guides
teaches. The eye of God rests on and gu
us. It is not a way marked out and left;
God Himself who watches over and guide
in a way that suits Him.

It is attention to Him, and the followin
it with understanding, that is the way; and
the soul is inwardly taught what is agreeabl
Him, and is formed after Him in knowle
This the New Testament largely unf
(Phil. i. 9–11; Col. i. 9, 10; Col. iii.
Eph. iv. 24.)

It is the spiritual learning of God's
through His guidance, and communion
Him, founded on His favour. Hence they
warned not to be like an unintelligent be
who must be outwardly held. God can g
us thus, does graciously sometimes by
providence; but there is no spiritual un
standing, no moral assimilation to His nat
no growth of the delight of our new natur
Him, no increased capacity, by this means,
knowing God.

PSALM XXXIII.

ıll the psalms, to the end of xxxix., unfold moral state of the Jewish remnant in the days.

salm xxxiii. follows on the last verse of lm xxxii., and, the thought of forgiveness ing put a new song in his mouth, he can : out with clearer confidence on the principles which men should act, looking to the word works of God.

'he earth is viewed as under God's eye and ction. His government as applied to it.

'he works of Jehovah are done in truth. I r perfectly reckon on His acting on the wn principles of His holy will. Hence His d, which is essentially right, can judge me r. This is always an important principle. ɛ Lord, though not visibly and publicly, does ern all things. Hence I can act on His d, and be sure of the consequences. I may, doubt, suffer for Christ : this is a still better ısing, but the result of acting on God's word be blessing.

Ve have to walk through this world as the :t of God ; and this is a most blessed posi-. It is according to the foreknowledge of l the Father ; but we walk in the conscious-ɜ of being the elect of God. He orders and ıions all hearts.

(To be continued.)

WHAT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SAINTS?

PAGES 438–459.

It is an unhappy circumstance that many Christians have an idea that *responsibility* and grace are incompatible (and by grace I mean full saving grace), and if strongly impressed with the necessary truth of the one, they reject the other.

This arises partly from the groundless supposition that *responsibility* and uncertainty, as to the result, necessarily go together; partly from a confusion between the *responsibility* of man, sinful man, and the saints' *responsibility*; and partly from the supposition that *responsibility* and power *must* necessarily go together. All these suppositions are founded on human reasonings, and are all alike groundless.

When a Roman cut off his thumb, so that he could not hold a spear, his *responsibility* to the state to be a soldier had not ceased, although he had not the power to fulfil his *responsibility*. The responsibility flowed from another source, namely, his being a Roman subject or citizen. If I command my child to come, and it will not, alleged incapacity to come, if true, is not an excuse, if it willed not to come. Had the will been there, the incapacity might have been removed.

Again, the elect angels are bound to do God's

will, but there is no uncertainty. God sustains them in will and deed; they delight to do His will, and there is no question at all about the result. Such a question cannot be raised.

Even Christ Himself was *responsible* to do His Father's will when He had undertaken it; but there could be no question for a moment as to failure.

Every created being is *responsible*; that is, he ought always to do God's will, not his own. It flows from the necessary and immutable relation of the creature to the Creator. The creature ought to be, in all its thoughts and ways, what suits the relationship in which it exists.

All relationships as such have duties in the including thoughts and feelings which correspond to and express the relationship. Husband and wife, father and child, master and servant, brother and sister, by virtue of the relationship in which they are, ought to be what the word expresses, and all that is implied in it. The relationship is not the duty; but the duty is inseparable from the thought of it.

[Men] do not really believe till taught of God, that we are in a fallen state, yet all their life betrays it. They are in no relationship with God from which duties flow, save that in which they have already failed.

But if *God creates* any being, He creates it

in and for the position it is in, whatever be His ultimate purpose, and cannot mean it to abide in inconsistency with the position he has placed it in. It would be a kind of blasphemy against Him and deny judgment.

No, the angels that kept not their first estate are reserved in chains of darkness. Man, who kept not his first estate, is passed under death, and excluded from paradise, awaiting also the judgment of God, except as delivered and saved in Christ. "So he drove out the man."

But then the notion man has of *responsibility* —that of conduct by which life might be won— is a mere consequence of our fallen state, of our alienation from God.

What man is, as fallen, is not really acknowledged: for if such be our position, we are already lost. We need to be saved.

But *responsibility* to pursue a course of conduct by which we gain a position or a reward is not the only character of *responsibility:* nay, it is an unnatural one—one which flows from disordered relationships. True, genuine *responsibility* is the walking according to a position in which we are, and which carries its obligation with it.

The impossibility of losing the position does not alter the *responsibility*, but makes it perpetual.

A child is a child always to its parent, be he *a good* child or a disobedient one. We must

get the thought well fixed in our minds, that *responsibility* connected with labour for the yet uncertain attainment of a relationship in which we are not yet, is an extraordinary, and, so to speak, unnatural kind of *responsibility*.

When we come to the real fact of what a creature is, we shall find that uncertainty does not characterise *responsibility* as much as we suppose. If not sustained of God by divine strength, we shall fall : if sustained, we shall not. Our sense of this dependence is our daily safety. "Without me ye can do nothing." The angels that fell, and Adam, are witnesses of the path of a ceature, left to his *responsibility*, untempted or tempted.

The elect angels and renewed men are examples of beings sustained of God in *responsibility*. But man is not of this mind. He is, he says, in a state of probation ; he thinks that, though fallen, he may (doubtless, he will say, with God's help) make out the leading a life which will adequately satisfy his *responsibility*. Many, of course, will add the goodness of God (as they will feel their path imperfect), and the merits of Christ, to make up what fails.

The truth is, that what is here called goodness is merely a hope that God will think as lightly of our sins as we do, and as we, for safety's sake, should like Him to do, which is a sure proof of not being converted.

As to the merits of Christ, they are not meant to make sin excusable, but righteousness perfect before God. His blood cleanses from sin, because God will have none before Him. He is our righteousness, and it is a divine and perfect one, but He is not to make up ours so that our failures are forgotten.

Man is *responsible* to live before God according to the position he is in as man. He has got wholly out of this. Morally, he is a sinner. But the character of the *responsibility* depends on the relationship between man and God, and man and man. He has to act according to the relationship in which he is as man towards each. This is abstractedly what he ought to be.

He pretends to be or to will it, and takes his position on this ground to seek God's favour and life. God takes him up on this ground. "This do, and thou shalt live."

The *responsibility* (to fulfil the law) was undertaken, not fulfilled; and what was ordained for life was found to be for death. This is not all that man has done, but I confine myself to my subject, namely, what was done as to inheriting eternal life, by meeting our *responsibility* as men. IT IS CLOSED.

We have lost our created position in innocence; we cannot gain another by our conduct. We are, as men, lost! The *responsibility* was there in paradise, and man failed. What is needed for us is the distinct recovery of it.

But God's salvation is another thing. That s not our *responsibility*.

The whole question of our *responsibility*, as iving in the life of man before God, is settled ɔy Christ's judicially bearing the consequences ɔefore God, and by the death of the life in which we stood as sinners. But then Christ is ıow a new life.

More than this, I am a child, a son. Such s my relationship with God. I have eternal ife. I am in a known, blessed, fixed relation-ship with God.

Here then I enter into the true kind of *esponsibility*. My *responsibility* now is a *esponsibility* flowing from the position in which I am in; which belongs in peace to it, not one ɔy which it is to be attained—a *responsibility* such as all our *responsibilities* are according to God, that of walking according to the position n which I am already.

He that says he abides in Christ ought to walk as He walked. My *responsibility* is that of a Christian. I am to walk as one, because I am one, not that I may be one.

The fact that I am a child for ever is not a reason for not walking like one. It is only the baseness of a morally ruined being, that he could suppose he was not to be consistent with the relationship he was in because it was an unchangeable one.

My *responsibility*, then, is not as a man in the first Adam, but as a Christian in the second.

On the first ground I am wholly lost already; it is vain to talk of *responsibility*, unless to convince of sin. On the second, because I am saved, and a child of God in the family, I am become *responsible* for walking as such, like the example of the Firstborn of many brethren.

Christian *responsibility* is the *responsibility* of being a Christian; that is, of walking because we are in Christ, as Christ walked, through Christ dwelling in us.

Our place before God is Christ—our part to exhibit Christ before men. This, while the flesh is still in us, and the world around us, needs the daily cross. "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal body."

Our *responsibility* is not to attain unto life, but to manifest it, in spite of hindrance, yea, through hindrances, and in the midst of the world.

Here in the daily exercise of the life we have got, in which we learn what we are practically; and the faithfulness, graciousness, and tenderness of God are daily experienced, and to be felt by us; in which we have our senses exercised to discern good and evil, the contrast *between* God and the flesh is deeply learned,

hat is mere nature discerned through what is
›iritual; while the effect of all is, that one is
nptied of self and Christ acquires, in a certain
nse, an exclusive place, and becomes all in all.

The soul is satisfied with Him, and hence
lowliness and singleness of eye can discern
ıat is flesh, and either avoid it, or content
elf without the false support its efforts or
jects give to the natural heart, which leans
them.

Two means are employed of God to carry
ɜ redeemed through the desert, the word of
ɔd, and priestly intercession: they may be
ınd in Hebrews iv. 11–15.

The word is the weapon of God to discern
:tween that which is of the spirit, and every-
ing in which the will of the flesh works.

All that is mere nature, which is ever a snare,
ıd positive sin where the will is at work, gets
ten so closely allied to what God Himself has
eated and owned, that the close application of
e word, in the power of the Spirit, is needed
distinguish.

Yet morally they are most different and
›posed, because God is not in the one, but
ıman will; and is in the other, as affections
r example, which become idolatrous (though
ɜitimate, and in themselves right) or passions.
ı these and in all cases, the word, sharper
an any two-edged sword, the true sword of

the Spirit, is the means by which God first of all judges in us all that would make us tend to fall in the desert.

Then for all weakness and even failure comes the priesthood; it is exercised to maintain or restore the communion of the saint, while walking in weakness.

Nor do we go to Christ in repentance that He may intercede for us: this would be distrust of the perfect love of the Father, into whose presence He has brought us as children, nor would any one do so really, but He intercedes for us that we may repent. Our souls are thus restored through grace to communion, or maintained in it. Intercession is for the saints.

For will, the word is used; for weakness and for failure, the grace of priesthood.

The other point to which I allude is our encouragement in the course we have to run. This is afforded us in promises and rewards, to which is annexed the careful and faithful government of the Father, who chastens where needed.

God is sovereign in the revelation of His goodness to the heart, and knows when to grant it: but He has revealed principles of government.

It is evident God cannot have communion even with an idle thought.

As regards righteousness and salvation,

ard can have no possible place. These
ileges are in Christ and perfect. They
the reward, so to speak, of His labours
work. So, if one take reward as the
ive for work, he is wholly on false ground.
e and obedience are the only true motives,
hey were on Christ Himself.

ut rewards are presented as encouragements
he difficulties which are on the road into
ch love and obedience bring us.

hus it could be said of Christ, "Who for
joy," &c.

et the word keeps steadily before us, that it
f grace, and that, in rewarding His labourers,
d does what He will with His own.

ut as to righteousness and salvation all are
e.

his sovereignty is exercised in giving the
ard according to the labour in gift and
ing; so that God's government and the
t's *responsibility* may be displayed; yet so
t the saint is brought more clearly to say,
ot I, but the grace of God which was in
"

t is exactly he who has the deepest sense of
onsibility who will most deeply feel his
ire dependence upon grace.

f these questions are mixed up with that
salvation, all is legal and false; but when
ar on *this, the* exercise of heart in them

is most useful, as leading to the sense of dependence, confiding in Him who is able to bless, and delights to do it—the sense that there is a living God, that we can do nothing of ourselves, nothing without Christ. It humbles and leads to daily confiding dependence upon God.

The principle I have alluded to above will be found to be universal, namely, that reward is in scripture never the motive of action, always the encouragement of him who is active from other motives.

Finally, grace is such, that what God gives as the ground of destruction in judgment, "I will consume, for it is a stiff-necked people," once grace is known Moses can give as a reason for God's going with them: "If I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us; for it is a stiff-necked people."

THE SAINTS' PRAISE AS TAUGHT AND LED BY CHRIST.

PAGES 460–469.

There is much more method in the Psalms than is generally supposed.

In Psalm xix. we have two great witnesses of the power and thoughts of God. First from *verses 1–6*, the witness creation affords, and *especially* the heavens: "The heavens declare

the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork."

From verse 6 to the end, the perfection of the law is spoken of, its value for the soul of man, wherever it brings its light, and the moral power of its instructions. These witnesses have their own unchangeable character.

Man has been able to corrupt and change the face of the earth, and judgment and destruction have come upon it, death and misery. What is reached by man is, alas! corrupted by man. But the heavens, and the sun in its course, proclaim with bright and unvarying witness (blessed be God, beyond the reach of man's corrupting hand) the glory of Him that made them.

Man may have indeed perverted these witnesses of power to idolatry, but where man does not reach, all creation still proclaims the glory of God its Creator.

But another witness of deeper and fuller character, One who was a witness to the nature as well as the power of God, appeared amongst those who were guilty of sin, and under the bondage of corruption. Christ was amongst men.

It was love itself; God, who is love, manifested as man in the midst of corruption; man perfect in love to God and to his neighbour; in a word, the witness of divine love and human perfectness, in the midst of corruption.

The perfection of the witness He bore caused His rejection, and for His love He found hatred. The Christ found a day of trouble, scorned and rejected by the people to whom He came in love, and according to promise and prophecy.

But when He comes to suffer from God for sin, to pass through death its wages, who could go with Him there? Who could pass through these waters of Jordan, when they overflowed all their banks? "As I said to the Jews, so now say I to you," declares the Lord to His disciples, "whither I go ye cannot follow me now." This was the true power of death itself as the path to glory.

None could observe with sympathy, or fathom, or express, what the suffering He had underwent was. The words are in the mouth of the sufferer who was alone, and alone could express them. He was there, no doubt, suffering from man as man. Dogs and bulls of Bashan had closed Him round; but His cry was to Jehovah, that He at least would not be far from Him.

But no, the fathers had trusted and were delivered; but this blessed One must drink the cup to the dregs. Perfect and sinless, He could say, "*Why* hast thou forsaken me?" We have learnt and say why. It was for us.

This is the name [Son] which, as heard from the horns of the unicorns, He declares to His

'ethren. Such was His first thought. How veet it is to see this!

The moment He has entered into the enjoyent of this name, of this relationship with od, He must bring His brethren into the me relationship and the same joy. Previously deed He never called them brethren. The rn of wheat abode alone.

Now, redemption was wrought out, and He uld bring them into the same place of blessg as Himself! His precious love does it at ce. "Thou hast heard me from the horns of e unicorns. I will declare thy name unto my ethren."

He sets us in this perfect place of blessing, nere He is Himself. "In the midst of the ngregation will I sing praise unto thee." ow sweet to see the Lord leading the praises the congregation, the poor remnant whom e has gathered by His death and quickened nto joy of His resurrection.

"Thou wilt shew me the path of life; in thy esence is fulness of joy; and at thy right nd are pleasures for evermore." Into this e now brings His brethren. He leads the orus of praise. Thus our praise must be cording to the fulness with which Christ ows and enjoys the blessedness of the fruit of is work and the relationship into which He s entered as man in virtue of it—or it is disrd.

PSALM LXIX.

PAGES 472–482.

There are three states of suffering in which souls may be: first, that which is their portion as sinners under judgment; second, the sufferings of a saint for righteousness or love's sake; third, suffering as the consequence of sin under the judgment of God.

No doubt, the Lord Jesus went through all these kinds of sufferings; of course, the first and last as saving or sympathising with others.

The third class of suffering He did not go through, except anticipatively, just at the close of His life, when He said, "I have a baptism to be baptised with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!" If He had been in it all the time, He would not have spoken of going through it afterwards.

All through the life of Christ, He never calls God, *God*. We never find Him do so in the gospel until the cross.

When on the cross, which was expiation, He does not say "Father" until all being over, He was commending His Spirit to Him, but "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." As soon as He had gone through it, He uses both terms, "Father" and "God."

The suffering of Christ for righteousness' sake is intelligent enough in its nature, though its *depth* be hard to fathom. Our place in connec-

tion with it is also simple, filling up that which is left behind of the afflictions of Christ, suffering for love's sake; and this may go very deep into the soul, too; still there is joy with it if not in it; as we find Christ Himself having meat to eat. Going through this world, His heart was refreshed by the thought of souls getting blessing, and yet there was suffering with it.

When souls reject the gospel, or the church is going on badly, or saints are losing their own blessing; all this will affect us if we are not insensible, but we shall have balm in suffering in this way.

Psalm lxix. expresses this kind of suffering. Christ says, "I am the song of the drunkard," &c. These sufferings of Christ were deeper, I believe, than we have any idea of. He had all kinds of suffering on the cross; still that from man disappeared in comparison with that for sin from God.

There is often in God's ways with men suffering for righteousness' sake, and suffering for sin, or to prevent it; at the same time. (See 2 Cor. xii.; Heb. xii.) This often causes perplexity. For the Jews, under a sense of a broken law, there will be terrible trial of faith. They will see the ungodly in prosperity, while it is promised to the godly "They shall flourish like the palm tree."

The consequence of following in the way of righteousness brings dreadful trial on them, and yet what they go through is also in consequence of *their sins, yet not* condemnation. The nation

has received Antichrist because they would not have the Lord Jesus.

They are brought so low that, though faith is not extinct, they scarcely have any. "Shall he find faith on the earth?" They cry "How long?" The expression "how long" implies some faith left.

The suffering of the remnant is not suffering *with* Christ.

A redeemed soul may be going through many exercises of conflict between self and Satan to learn that there is no good in self.

Different characters need different experience. If there be pride of nature, where there is much levity of soul, or where dangers and temptations are before us, great exercise may be needed to make the value of Christ known.

You cannot prescribe to God a form of experience, but the soul must learn from Christ good and evil; all good as coming from Him, and the evil in our own will and nature, where it lives.

Some often go through great exercise that they may be used to others.

The path of obedience is not the path of darkness to us, though there may be darkness in getting into it. They are told to trust.

What the sufferings of Christ were, none can fathom; what this grand solution of the question of good and evil. We shall reap the blessedness in perfect good, blessed be the name of our God, where no evil can enter.

WAITING FOR THE GLORY.

1879.

I'M waiting for the glory:
  Are your thoughts with me too?
It is the old, old story,
  But all most sweetly true!

I'm waiting for the glory:
  Jesus Himself is there;
He's gone on high before me,
  Calls me with Him to share.

Jesus, the Lord, did love us,
  Will love us, to the end;
And lift our hearts above us,
  To love that—will not end!

For the day is nearing, nearing,
  When we shall see His Face;
Each step the way endearing,
  Which leads to that blest place.

For Jesus comes with power,
  To change these bodies vile,
Or raise them, in that hour,
  From where they rest awhile:

Then shall His soul's deep travail
  Find its love-fraught reward;
Nor joy, nor promise shall fail,
  With Him, like Him, their Lord!

But who's this all-glorious Lord,
  To whom each knee shall bow?
The Sorrower, once abhorred!
  The Lord in His glory now!

Spirit of Christ in the remnant, so that I have not much to remark on it.

But Himself was the first to suffer what here will be judged, but, as we have seen, never personally looks for judgment.

This psalm shews us the spirit in which judgment is demanded. It was after patience and unwearied grace, and when this grace was of no avail, when there was no self-avenging, but casting themselves on the Lord, that at the end the Lord is looked to for deliverance.

PSALM XXXVI.

Is spoken in connection with what is a very great trial.

The trial is this, that the ways of the wicked prove to the heart of the servant of God that there is no restraint of conscience, nothing to reckon on in them, no check to malice by the fear of God.

Flattering himself in his own sight, he is devising mischief, he has no abhorrence of evil. How often does this, alas! come before the saint when in conflict with the power of the enemy. It is hard to believe this absence of conscience and planning mischief in malice reflected or advisedly; yet so it is. The heart knows it is true. The word points it out as characteristic.

"Thy mercy, O Jehovah, is in the heavens."

What can malice do then? Its schemes cannot reach there.

The immutable principle of God's government in faithful love, His dealing in righteousness, is as firm and towering in strength as the mountains; His ways of judging and dealing as profound but as mighty as the great deep. Not fathomable beforehand by us as to how or why. He is working above the power of evil.

He can bring about His purposes of blessing by the malice of men. He preserves man and beast.

"They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures." There are joys and pleasures that belong to God's house, yea, to God Himself.

"With him is the fountain of life" (ver. 9), a word of great import, though never fully revealed till Christ came.

PSALM XXXVII.

Is very distinctly in connection with the display of the direct government of God in this world, as it will be made good when the meek shall inherit the land and the wicked be cut off.

The first exhortation is peacefulness of spirit (and it is general and applies to the state of the mind). "Fret not thyself."

When self-will and the desire of present satisfaction mingles itself with the love of righteousness . . . . one is apt to fret oneself because evil has its way.

We are neither to fret, which is distrust, nor be envious, which is even worse and self-interest.

Evildoers shall be cut off (the *saint* must not be among the number).

The latter part of the psalm is a careful declaration of this sure government of the earth to be publicly manifested in connection with the Jews, more secretly carried on in the time of heavenly grace, still ever true.

The steps of a good man are ordered by Jehovah. This is a vast and precious blessing, to think that in this wilderness, where there is no way in the midst of confusion and wickedness, our Father directs our steps.

A young Christian may, in confiding zeal, not so much see the value of this; but through how many experiences will he pass? But when one has seen the world, its snares, what a pathless wilderness of evil it is, it is beyond all price that the Lord directs our steps.

Also the humble young Christian *is* directed through grace, if he waits on the Lord, though he may not see the wisdom of it, nor the greatness of the privilege and mercy, till afterwards.

But this not all. Being so directed, the path is a good, a divine, path. There is indeed no other, and the heart is directed in it.

We have then to wait on the Lord, and to keep His way. The end of the perfect and of uprightness is peace. And so it is, practically, with a Christian; he may be chastened for particular faults, for God's ways are through mercy unbending and right; but when a man walks with upright purpose of heart in his life, that life closes—if it close this side of glory—in peace.

The fear of God and walking in His presence is a great means of peace.

PSALM XXXVIII.

Presents to us a special state of soul. The soul is in the depth of sorrow and distress, and this looked at as the chastening of the Lord.

The order of thought is thus remarkable: first, Jehovah judging, then sin as the cause, then personal misery, then abandonment of friends, then liveliness and ill-will of enemies, and the consciousness of all resulting in the heart confiding in Him that smote, turning to Him that smiteth it; and then comes out what at bottom was in the heart—hope in Jehovah.

All this leads to the expression of unfeigned *integrity of heart*; acknowledgment of sin, not *merely owning it* to be the cause of judgment,

s [Christ's] death, and the sorrows of His
ı, are not viewed as atoning, or bearing of
ı, but as sorrows, and sufferings, and grief.

rist was tried: He waited patiently for
ah. He was perfect and complete in all
rill of God. And this is our path through
:.

ıis is the great personal instruction of this
ı, save that Christ's own perfectness is
rs the greatest of all. "I waited patiently
ehovah"—that is, till Jehovah Himself
in.

: [Christ] would have no other deliverance
His. His heart was wholly right.

this is a pattern for the saints, trial is
d at as such, and death is not spoken of
as it may be trial—a horrible pit, miry
images of distress, terror, and, humanly
:ing, danger. The resource was a cry
hovah; and He was heard in that He
d.

PSALM XLI.

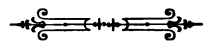
ks of the blessedness of those who could
:n this place of the poor. The Lord was
ıbove all, and understood it above all; but
ıow in the beatitudes how He pronounces
:d those who through grace are like Him
or in spirit.

ıough a psalm taking up a general cha-

racter, it is especially fulfilled in Christ, who used verse 9, as specially fulfilled in Himself. This poor man cried.

Blessed is he who enters into, and who has spiritual intelligence of, and interest in, this place of the poor man who waits, though in sorrow and lowliness, on Jehovah. If malice pursue him, he looks to Jehovah and His mercy, in integrity of heart.

(End of 1st Book of Psalms.)



PROMISE FULFILLED AND GOD REVEALED IN GRACE.

(LUKE IV. AND V.)

PAGES 482–487.

There are two great subjects in the life of the blessed Lord which Luke brings out: the fulfilment of promise, and the revelation of God in grace, in the "Son of man."

In chapter iv. the Spirit of God has shewn us the blessed One led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, victorious in trial, as the first man had failed in it.

He used, too, the weapon we have to use, the word of God; only we must remark that we learn from Ephesians vi., that to use the *word* we must first have all the defensive

.rmour, that is, the state of the soul must be ight. Christ, of course, was perfect and used t perfectly.

The Lord looks for rejection. First, then, ıs the anointed Man. "The Spirit of the Lord s upon me, because he hath anointed me to ›reach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me .o heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliver- ınce to the captives, and recovering of sight to :he blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, o preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Thus He presents Himself as the fulfiller of ›romise.

"This day is the scripture fulfilled in your :ars." This the haughty Jews would not bear, ınd gracious as His words had been, they are ıow ready to destroy Him for preaching a grace which Israel might lose all part in, as rejecting Him, and the Gentile get blessing by.

Now see the character in which the devils ›wn Him; . . . devils perforce own Him. . . . Men reject Him with hatred. "I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God." It was :he reluctant owning of a power they could not avoid.

In chapter v. He is seen in another character. He reveals, and is, Jehovah. In the miracu- lous draught of fishes He makes Himself known to the conscience of Peter. He sees the Lord

in it, and acknowledges himself a sinful man, unfit for His presence. This is always the effect of the revelation of God to us, and indeed of nothing else. Jesus speaks words of grace, "Fear not."

He heals the leper, which was Jehovah's work alone. The leper recognised His power, but was not sure of His goodness or willingness to help him. Now, if a man touched a leper he too was unclean. But here was a divine person come down, Jehovah, who could cleanse; One who could say, "I will," "be."

One sick of the palsy is brought to Him by faith. He goes to the root of all sorrow, and says, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." What is here revealed, is Jehovah present in full unmingled grace.

As the testimony and witness of this, the Lord does what is ascribed to Jehovah in Psalm ciii. along with the forgiveness of sins. "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases."

Lastly, the Lord shews, as the friend of publicans and sinners, that He had come in sovereign grace. But thus also He must be rejected. This new wine, for it was so, could not be put into old bottles. Judaism could not receive and be the vessel of sovereign grace.

THE RESURRECTION.

(1 Cor. xv.)

PAGES 488–497.

The *resurrection* after all is that which is the ll and perfect deliverance from the whole fect and consequence of sin.

Now, the *resurrection* shews that God is not inging about a modification of the scene in ich we are, but that He is bringing in a tally new power.

The discernment of this has the most im- rtant effect upon the way of life, the modes of eking to do good, the objects and efforts of ristians.

It is quite true, and I fully admit, that turally man has great and wonderful faculties; d faculties which, it may be, will be much ore developed than they now are. But still, ith all this, man morally is utterly ruined and st.

Paul opens out in this chapter what the cha- cter and power of *resurrection* is, the resur- ction of the just being the subject of it, though that of the unjust is also glanced at.

Man down here on the earth "disquieteth mself in vain," for wonderful as his natural culties *may be*, as soon as his "breath goeth

forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish." What then becomes of his wondrous faculties? All is gone, for there is no fruit whatever reaped by himself. The man may have directed the world, but what of that, if death comes in and writes nothingness upon his powers? Another may come after him and improve upon what he has done, but it is all gone as regards himself for ever, although the man has a moral responsibility in connection with it all.

A man will cast doubts on the *resurrection*, while he will speak of his immortality and magnify himself in it, because it is *me*. It is I that am immortal. But if I am the dead thing God raises from the dead, what then—where am I? Why my pride is brought down, and God's power is brought in and exalted.

Therefore if I am talking of immortality, I am talking of myself; but if talking of *resurrection*, I am wholly cast on God.

All the gospel rests on the *resurrection* of Christ.

There is no gospel at all, unless there is the *resurrection*. So truly was Christ dead in consequence of our sins, that if He did not rise from the dead, then all is utterly gone for ever. But so completely was Christ a dead *man for* us, that if He is not raised from the

dead, no man can ever be raised. And if dead people are not raised, then Christ is not raised.

It [resurrection] is to be "absent from the body, present with the Lord;" it is but the getting rid of a mortal body.

If Christ be raised, His saints must be raised, as a Head cannot be raised without a body: it would be monstrous.

Christ had the heart to come down to us. He did not throw down the blessing from heaven, but He came Himself to bring it.

The more faithfulness there is in us, the more sorrows doubtless; but then there will be consolations abounding. Only let us take up the cross, and if it be really the cross, we shall find Jesus with it, and the earnest and spring of glory in our hearts.

TO HIM THAT OVERCOMETH.

(REV. II.)

PAGES 498–515.

The failure of man, of the church even, does not touch the source of divine grace—the goodness of God. From Adam downwards everything placed in the hand of man has failed; *but this very* failure and evil of man has

been made the opportunity by God of shewing out more and richer grace.

Promise is that on which faith can rest when everything else fails.

Times of declension and unfaithfulness in the body give occasion for brighter manifestations of grace in individuals, who under such circumstances are brought into the enjoyment of close and blessed communion with God. See Elijah, Moses, &c.

The Lord takes notice of every circumstance, every shade of difference, in these churches, as also in individuals in them; thus shewing He is not indifferent as to the state of His people by the way—their daily steps, because He has secured blessing to them at the end. His love is not a careless love.

We have all, more or less, lost sight of the judgment exercised by the Lord in "his own house," and it is too frequently supposed that, because the salvation of a saint is a sure thing, God is indifferent about character here.

We have to remember that the church, and indeed every individual saint, is set in the place of direct conflict with Satan, the more so because of the high standing and privilege given us in Christ.

The flesh, by which Satan works, is still *present,* and needs to be "mortified."

Perhaps we have been often surprised at grievous falls in ourselves or others; but if we fail to watch against the flesh, it is not really at all surprising such should be the result. Habitual faithfulness in judging the flesh in little things is the secret of not falling.

If, through any measure of faithfulness, we find ourselves in trial and exercise of soul because of corporate general declension, that is just the very time we should look for more intimate revelation of the grace of God and of His love to our hearts.

The principle is clearly seen in these epistles. From the message to "the church at Ephesus" (vers. 1–7), we see there had already been failure there—failure in its "first love."

The *overcoming* spoken of (ver. 7), and indeed throughout the chapter, is not so much the *overcoming* of the world and that which was without, as of all the evil discovered to be within.

"I have somewhat against thee." (Ver. 4.) He takes notice of the least failure.

We always find that in judging, God goes back to the original sin.

There is nothing that the Lord has not gone through: death is the last effort of Satan's power; it ends there for the sinner, as well as for the saint. The unconverted even are

out of Satan's power when they die; if they die in their sins, of course they come under the judgment of God, but Satan has no power in hell. He may have pre-eminence in misery, but no power there (his reigning is some poet's dream, it is here he reigns, and that by means of the pride and vanity, the evil passions and idleness, of men); he is "the ruler of the darkness of this world," not of the next.

Our works are not what we could desire them to be. The answer to all our thoughts and estimate about ourselves is, "I know your works," your business is to know Me.

There were all sorts of opposition to the faithful, but what does the Lord say to them? "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer." (Ver. 10.)

The Lord does not say to this church (Smyrna), "I will save you from suffering," for suffering was needful in order to prevent it from tumbling headlong into decay, and yet the Lord says, as it were, to some among them who were faithful, Do not be the least uneasy.

In the beginning of the failure in "the churches" the promise to the "overcomer" in the midst of the decay was, that he should eat, in security and peace, of the "tree of life."

"I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, *even* where Satan's seat is." (Ver. 13.) That

s where the church now found itself, "where Satan's throne is"—(for he is the prince of t)—in the world. And the faithful may find themselves there too, if the church be there. We have to separate ourselves from the evil around, though we may not be able to separate ourselves from the consequences of the evil, but our comfort like theirs is that the Lord says, "I know thy works, and where thou dwellest."

God in His grace takes full knowledge of all that concerns us; of the circumstances in which we are. There is great comfort in knowing this. We might be placed, by means over which we had no control, in a very trying position, but in one which it would not be at all the mind of the Lord we should quit, where christian conduct would be very difficult.

He takes notice if we do but hold fast His name amidst circumstances which make even that measure of faithfulness difficult. "Thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith." (Ver. 13.)

The "white stone" seems to mark the individual approbation of Christ; the "new name" peculiar intercourse between Christ and the individual, different from that which all shall share alike—different from the public joy. There is a public joy.

Our souls must value this personal approval of Christ, as well as think of the public approval.

The latter will be great blessedness; but there is no peculiar affection in it, nothing that stamps peculiar love on the individual.

Glory will be common to all, but glory is not affection.

The especial danger which belongs to such a state of things (when the common course of the church is not straight)—is each according to his own will, chalking out a path for himself, because of the unfaithfulness and disobedient walk of the professing body.

What faith has to do in such circumstances is to lay hold intelligently, soberly and solemnly on the Lord's mind, and to walk according to it, strengthened by the promises which He has attached to such a path as He can own.

But, beloved, are we really content to have an approval which Christ only knows? Let us try ourselves a little. Are we not too desirous of man's commendation of our conduct? or, at least, that he should know and give us credit for the motives which actuate it? Are we content, so long as good is done, that nobody should know anything about us?—even in the church to be thought nothing of? that Christ alone should give us the "white stone" of His approval, and the "new name, which no man knoweth save only he that receiveth it"? Are *we content*, I say, to seek nothing else?

Oh, to think what the terrible evil and treachery of the heart must be that is not satisfied with Christ's special favour but seeks honour (as we do) one of another instead!

I ask you, beloved, which would be most precious to you, which you prefer—the Lord's public owning of you as a good and faithful servant, or the private individual love of Christ resting upon you, the secret knowledge of His love and approval? He whose heart is especially attached to Christ will respond—"the latter." Both will be ours, if faithful, but we shall value this most, and there is nothing that will carry us straight on our course as the anticipation of it.

We are united to One who is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens," and we therefore are so too. Most sublime truth! Yet how simple and practical! When realised it must tell in every way and detail of life. How could one made higher than the heavens be seeking earthly things?

How could he, for instance, desire riches here? As another has said, "If an angel were to come down here, he would be just as willing to sweep the streets as to be a king; much more then one who has this personal, intimate consciousness of union with Christ?" Nay, the more of a *servant*, the happier he will be.

Love necessarily made Jesus a servant when here below.

But in acting thus, we must remember there is much of difficulty. We have Satan always to resist us. We have to overcome him in a variety of circumstances and trials; not only to contend with, but to *overcome*; and this too with a flesh that, if not mortified, will always be ready to lend a hand to him. So that it is not all joy, although we are set in so blessed a place.

This keeping the flesh mortified is the great thing, the secret of all strength in practical difficulties, and nothing will do it but living in communion and fellowship with the Lord.

But if there be not the every-day, commonplace diligence to break the power of every-day difficulties and keep down every-day evil, we shall have to contend with the flesh instead of Satan (with whom our conflict ought to be), while it will give him power to come in when we are not ready to meet him, we shall have to get the armour in order, at the time the fight should begin.

We owe it to Him [Christ] to gain ground upon the world where Satan reigns—to stand in such a position as to be able to go forward and deliver individual souls from his power in *every* shape. There is not the looking to His

ıce and the holding fast His name, if it is so.

To have *overcome* will add to our joy in the of His appearing and bring more glory to m now.

THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA.

(JOHN IV. 1–26.)

VOL. XII.

PAGES 2–17.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Giver of the irit of God to them that believe.

As sinners our intercourse with God is susıded for ever except through Christ.

The Pharisees were jealous and murmured at ring that Jesus had made more disciples than ın. Jesus therefore, to follow peace with all n, left Judea, and departed again into Galilee, ng through Samaria; there being, in His rnal counsel, a needs be for it—even to meet poor sinner.

There was everything around to make Him ary:—sin, hatred, ingratitude, ill-will, and n opposition, and toil; but, though wearied the contemplation of these, He was never ıried in the testimony of love: this was meat y knew not of.

There was no love of bodily ease, no selfishs dictates His love in any particular; it was

one unmitigated scene of active love. He was wrapped up in the one sole object for which he was on earth, and nothing could divert Him.

What do we find Him doing? Just sitting alone with a wicked sinner, by the side of a well, to settle the great question of eternity with her, to shew her *herself*, and to make known *Himself* to her.

See how the Lord humbled Himself! Among the Jews it was considered the depth of degradation even to hold any communication or converse with the Samaritans; to be beholden to them for a favour would not be tolerated by them. But here we have the Lord of glory asking for a drink of water from one of the worst in the city of the Samaritans.

"If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." Now there is the great truth, the ignorance of which ruins the world.

It is the knowledge of whom we have to do with that puts us on asking for His gifts, for this gift of the Holy Spirit in us (which is Christ's to give) is to be in the believer a well—always living water—not a pool, which, though full, may be liable to be dried up, but a well that cannot dry up.

Satan uses these things (things of time and ense) as instruments in his hands of keeping he soul from Christ. Let it be what it may, et it be only a waterpot, he cares not, so that : occupies the mind to the exclusion of the nowledge of Christ.

It may be pleasure, it may be amusement, ain, reputation, family duties, lawful employ- ıents, so that it keeps the soul from fixing n Christ. That is all he wants.

It may be harmless—it may be innocent in self—it may even be praiseworthy in itself. ut has it been of sufficient weight with you to eep you from Christ? Is He a stranger to ou? and are you a stranger to His great ifts.

Her mind was occupied with the purpose for hich she came to the well—a lawful and neces- ıry purpose; and so she had no mind for the ıings of Christ.

The natural mind is on natural things, and es everything through that medium; it is ıut up in its own little circle of feelings and eas, and can neither see nor feel beyond it, ıere it looks for all its enjoyment; there it es, there it continues, and there it dies.

"The natural man receiveth not the things of e Spirit of God, neither can he know them, r they are spiritually discerned;" and the

reason is this:—they have neither seen nc known God in whose presence they are, neithe have they even been made partakers, by fait in Christ, of God's gift of the Holy Spiri whereby they discern spiritually.

They have no perception of the exclude state in which they are in regard to G and heaven; neither do they know anything the entrance into the new life, the new creatio because the entrance of the Spirit has nev been experienced in their hearts; they a foolish and worldly and know nothing of God

In spite of the stupidity of this sinful Sama tan, the Lord still continues His labour of lov The patience of His love is never exhauste for it proceeds from an inexhaustible source "God is love." He had tried expostulati and entreaty, but she could not understai Him, He therefore says, "Go, call tl husband."

In this one sentence her little world iniquity was unravelled to her mind.

The Lord struck the chord to the conscien of the sinner—it vibrated. The stranger co vinced her what she never before in reali believed—that she was a sinner. Such ev follows the testimony of the truth, when broug home with power to the soul of the sinner.

Her mind is now taken off from her wate

ɔt, and she inquires where she was to worship od. Much might be said of the reply here ven to her on the worship God alone requires -spiritual worship.

Not one word of anger, not one word of re- ·oach, passes the Lord's lips.

We are too much occupied with our water- ɔt to know the Lord of glory seated at its ell. But let the truth be brought to ourselves, en even the world, self-lover as it is, will hate ɜelf.

And what follows? What are its effects here? The woman left her waterpot," and reported it all she met with, entreating them likewise to ıme to Jesus. And this effect will ever follow e clear perception of Christ to the soul—the tal leaving of what before the carnal mind was ntred in. She came for water. This was all e wanted then; her mind was on that one ing. But soon she thought not of well, water, waterpot. Her mind had centred in another ıject.

A new life is thus given; and the soul is ıickened; a well of water is put within us. here is then something in the soul which, ways springing up, has always the power of freshment, tending to whence it came—the ·ing fountain of waters—Christ Jesus; tending wards the glory of the Lord Jesus, and re- *iving all its glory* from thence.

Under the full recognition and sensib
ception of this the world is of little
wealth is despised, power is despised, dist
is despised; the soul finds no wealth
Christ, no power but by Christ, no dist
but from Him. So far as this power of p
tion is in us, so far will our joy be
springs from the divine nature in us,
tends to its glorious giver, Christ. It is
spring; it draws from the Lord of gl
has fellowship and its associations are a
Him.

If you have not the inward refreshing
which Christ gives to all His people, you w
whatever else you have of little—of no—
for when the sun of temptation, of tr
affliction comes, that which is in you
dried up as a useless pool without spring, v
any refreshing source.

ETERNAL LOVE.

During Mr. Darby's residence in Pau, in the years 1879–81, the thought of hymns addressed to "The Father" was much present to his mind.

1880.

FATHER! Thy sovereign love has sought
Captives to sin, gone far from Thee:
The work that Thine own Son hath wrought
Has brought us back, in peace, and free!

And now, as sons before Thy face,
With joyful steps the path we tread,
Which leads us on to that blest place
Prepared for us, by Christ our Head.

Thou gav'st us, in eternal love,
To Him, to bring us home to Thee,
Suited to Thine own thoughts above,
As sons, like Him, with Him to be

In Thine own house! There love divine
Fills the bright courts with cloudless joy:
But 'tis the love that made us Thine
Fills all that house without alloy!

O, boundless grace! What fills with joy
Unmingled all that enter there,
God's nature, love without alloy,
Our hearts are given e'en now to share!

God's righteousness with glory bright,
Which with its radiance fills that sphere,
E'en Christ—of God the power and light,
Our title is that light to share.

O Mind Divine! so must it be,
That glory all belongs to God!

K

O Love Divine! that did decree
We should be part, through Jesus' blood!

O, keep us, Love Divine, near Thee!
That we our nothingness may know;
And ever to Thy glory be,
Walking in faith while here below.

It is a significant fact, acted on generally and admitted, that the hymns of the late beloved J. N. D. express more accurately and adequately than any others, the full position and privileges both of the individual saint and the church of God, and especially our fellowship with the Father and His Son, and all it involves.—[ED.]

PHILIPPIANS II. AND III.

PAGES 516-523.

The whole epistle is a very remarkable one, and raises the Christian to his highest condition of matured experience.

The former [chap. ii.] gives us christian character, as men speak—christian grace; the latter [chap. iii.] the energy which carries the Christian above present things. The former speaks of Christ coming down and humbling Himself; the latter, of His being on high, and of the prize of our calling above.

Oh that we knew how to be a little self judging and complete in our Christian path.

Not that I expect that all Christians will ever have alike all qualities. I do not think it is the mind of God they should have. The eye can*not*—it is not meant it should—say to the hand, *I have* no need of thee; nor the hand to the *feet.*

Completeness is in Christ alone.

That chapter ii. gives us the humiliation of Christ is evident.

Every one should think of the spiritual gifts and advantages of his brother as well as of his own. To do this he must have the mind that was in Christ. This leads us to the great principle of the chapter.

Love delights to serve; self likes to be served. Thus the true glory of a divine character is in lowliness, human pride in selfishness.

Salvation is always in the Philippians the great result of final deliverance from evil and entrance into glory.

Everything is looked at at the end, though the blessing shines down on the way.

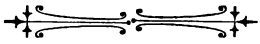
Epaphroditus was longing after them all. He had undertaken his commission heartily—came probably along the Egnatian high road nearly a thousand miles, and, in his refusal of relaxation, had been sick, nigh unto death. But it was the work of Christ.

Did Paul appreciate it the less as to himself because it was for Christ? In no way. Had Epaphroditus fallen a victim to his service for him, it would have been to the apostle a deep blow and sorrow, and that he had his cup full of, *though sustained* of God.

What had made Epaphroditus anxious was,

that the Philippians had heard he had been s
and he knew this. He reckoned on their lc
They will be anxious, he thought, and will
be at rest until they know how I am ; I m
set off to them. Such was the affec
amongst Christians, and among Christians wh
devotedness and love had, alas! already sa
waned—where all sought their own, as a gen
state.

If we look at ourselves, we could never sp
of humbling ourselves, for we are nothing.



PHILIPPIANS III., IV.

PAGES 525-532

Salvation in this epistle is looked at as bef
the Christian ; not as an uncertainty, but as
thing not yet attained.

It is the actual possession of glory. Chr
has laid hold of the believer for it, but he
looking to lay hold on it.

The old man, the whole estate is done w
in the apostle's mind, righteousness and all, a
his mind is fixed on the new, that is, on Chr
Himself. "That I may win Christ."

This leads us directly to the great princi
of the chapter : the earnest undistracted foll
ing after this glory, after Christ Himself

heeding nothing else, counting all as worthless, for its attainment.

It is one of the beauties of Christianity, that it gives, through our perfect reconciliation in Christ, the pure peacefulness of affections perfectly happy in an existing relationship, and with it the highest object of hope, which urges to unceasing activity. These are the two forming elements of human nature for good; both in the highest and a divine way are found in Christ.

When modern infidelity would exalt man, it simply exalts self. Christianity exalts man even o divine glory, and divine excellency, but it ets aside self wholly.

Learning is gain for self. To be English, rench, &c., to have my own righteousness as reputation in the world, or a title with God, is elf. I am what others are not.

The world wants these motives—of course t does; it has no other. Energy is produced y them, but there is no moral advance. Self emains the spring, the centre of human activity.

A larger circle may be produced round self, ut self remains the centre still. "Master, that hou shouldest give us to sit, one on thy right and and another on thy left hand, in thy kingdom." This was self—a good place which *thers would* not have. None of this is found re. "*That* I may win Christ" is the highe

blessing, the blessedest affections, but all transferring the heart from self to Christ.

The moral state of the soul is formed and characterised by its objects. Here we are made partakers of the divine nature and have divine objects.

This is the force of "by any means"—not a doubt, but whatever it may cost, whatever road I have to take, so as I attain, I am content; yea, I can rejoice in suffering and death. I shall be so much more like the Christ I am anxious of attaining.

He followed after that he might attain and apprehend that (lay hold upon and possess it) for which Christ had apprehended him. Two things ensued; he followed nothing else—had no other object.

This kept him looking straight forward, and never occupied with the ground he had passed over.

This gives another marked effect of this energy of the single eye. It looks exclusively at what is heavenly. This gives a heavenly temperament and habit to the whole man. His conversation is in heaven; his relationships of life are all up there. The heart is intelligent as to its source and way.

Chapter iv. tells us of the calmness and superiority to circumstances which characterises the *Christian* in this world through faith in Christ.

PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE PSALMS.

SECOND BOOK.

n the early part of this second book of the ılms there is an element which gives a very :inct character to its spiritual as well as to its phetical import—the absence of the covenant ne of God (the transition to Jehovah is in ılm xlvi.).

Whatever the distresses and sorrows of the t forty-one psalms, the psalmist always looks :ly to Jehovah in them.

Here he is cast out. He remembers these ıgs. He is an outcast, and can only, in the :et of his soul and in wilderness circum- ıces, look to the nature and essence of what d is.

We have still to remember the difference of nature of relationship of Jehovah and the her.

'salm xxii. furnishes us with the expression his difference in the strongest way. There ist Himself was out of the enjoyment of own relationship with the Father, having n made sin for us. In human sorrows He once does not find divine comfort.

PSALM XLII.

The psalm goes no further than hope, b is a hope deepened and made more tru trial.

It [the soul] thirsts after God Himself.

The individual heart wants God for i The divine nature in us craves after its de in God, the objective fulness that satisfi because it is the divine nature. His thi perfect after that—that one great bl object, which fills all the desires and exc every other.

Sorrow, when it is complete and hel gives intimacy with Him who is willing able to help, and this is now with God. tells his sorrow to God. (Ver. 5.)

The troubles themselves come from Inward self-judgment and looking to God Him and Him alone into everything.

Note how, when once we see the har God in our sorrows, we can look for del ance, because it is God, and His hand is c in love.

PSALM XLIII.

Is [the soul] looking out for a deliver which shall enable it to enjoy God freely fully.

It is the desire to be manifestly with H *peace,* and to glorify and praise Him openl

God is his exceeding joy, and God is his God; and the outward restoration is presently looked forward to.

PSALM XLIV.

Two great principles, faithfulness to the will and authority of God, whatever disaster and seeming desertion there may be, and looking for no other help than God Himself, who seems to have deserted the faithful, are here in play.

This puts integrity utterly to the test, and personal faith; and that is just what is needed for the soul to be in the state in which it can be restored to the full joy of positive blessing.

The fact that God thus tests His people (and He does so now spiritually before peace be obtained) is one of deep import.

There was no turning in heart to idols. They preferred suffering anything, or suffer what they might, for owning the true God; they would do it for His own sake, for the attachment of their heart to Him, for what He was when they got no blessing.

"For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." (Ver. 22.) To test it fully, and make it real suffering for God, the blessings which belong to His *power must* not be there.

PSALM XLV.

The object is evidently the celebration o Messiah the King. The heart feels it is in diting a good matter. When Christ is befor the soul it is enlightened and roused.

Here doubtless as King, in His victories, s there is more of human triumph than in th Christian's estimate of Him.

Collectively we expect the Bridegroom; ir dividually, the Saviour, who is not ashamed t call us brethren.

Association with Christ breaks off previou associations which nature has had, and form wholly new ones. This is, of course an evidently, a principle which is of an absolut and decisive character. But this is put in th strongest way here. "So shall the king great desire thy beauty." For the Christian the that he may walk so that the *Lord* may hav delight in him, there is an entire breaking c with all that nature is linked up with.

It is the state of the soul. It was to FORGE all that had a claim on it according to natur It is the coming in of Christ which calls fo this. He has Himself done it—broken wit the world by death, and entered on a ne *world* by resurrection. His claim is absolut *and in* contrast with all others.

It was another order of relationships.

old ones are left, the new ones are entered on by redemption out of them.

No counter claim can be allowed. It is not owning His. Being His is all our being. As scripture expresses it, "Christ is all." This is denied if concurrent claims are allowed.

PSALM XLVI.

Gives us one most simple truth, but a most solemn and weighty one—one much needed by Christians in the heavings of this world, and in the tendency to seek relief by human effort. "Be still, and know that I am God." That is the exhortation. The encouragement is this, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

But if God takes this character, the waters may rage and be troubled, and the mountains shake with their swelling; we can be still. For, no matter what power or swelling there is, if God be there, our refuge. Only we must wait and wait till He comes in: and here it is faith is tried. Hence, "and know that I am God."

It implies that nothing else is a refuge, and this is perfect reliance, and implies that all else may be against us.

The *great point* is, that it is God as such *who is our refuge* and strength. He does not *say the Lord.*

God Himself is looked to; and the fact that we are left wholly to Him, and that no other resource is there, makes all the power of evil immaterial to us; for it is nothing against God.

Other help we might calculate and compare the value of. This only requires faith. "Ye believe in God." Against this help all human help is unavailing; only we must wait for it. Human efforts shut this help out. It is another kind of resource which is not faith.

When there is not a duty, then our path is to be still, and we shall soon know that He is God. Human effort only spoils all. No human planning is ever right: in His own time and way God will come in.

There *are* duties. When there are, do them; but when the power of evil against us is there, and there is not a duty, the path is to be still. Human efforts prove want of faith, restlessness, and planning is mere flesh.

Elsewhere we have seen that integrity is needed to trust God, because it is God's holy nature which is trusted.

Endurance till deliverance is the path of the saint.

PSALM XLVII.

It is the triumph of God's people when deliverance is come in, prophetically announced. That which will be useful to remark is, how

y the government of the world is con-
with Israel.

PSALM XLVIII.

judgment by which His throne is
shed in Zion. The facts of the latter
e before the soul.

PSALM XLIX.

a commentary shewing the emptiness of
rld. Death proves the folly of all human
n and foresight, all of human grandeur—
non observation little acted on, but always

re is a morning coming when the righteous
ave the upper hand of those who seem
s regards this world. Death feeds on
or, as neglecters of God, they are sub-
to the righteous, when His judgment

w difficult, even if happy and heavenly-
d in Christ as to one's own joys, not
upon the things that are seen, to think
he wisdom, and talents, and success, and
val of men is simply nothing, the food of
; and that all the moral question lies
l, save so far as these may have deceived

re is no divine understanding in the man
heart is in the glory of the world.

Men will praise him. How well he has got on, settled his children, raised himself in his position! The fairest names will be given to it. He has no understanding. His heart is in what feeds death, and that death weighs it.

ALL the motives of the world are weighed by death.

THE TEN VIRGINS.

(MATT. XXV. 1–13.)

PAGES 18–27.

There are just two classes of character which we meet with in the world: first, those who have never heard the way of truth and salvation, and, in consequence, are not manifestly interested in it; and, secondly, those who have heard and professed to receive it. But the principles of the latter individually are very different.

"To you it is given," said Jesus, speaking to His disciples, "to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." Now the disciples, in common with the whole Jewish nation, fully expected an earthly kingdom; but, as they had entirely overlooked those prophecies which foretold Christ's coming in humiliation, they were bewildered; and therefore this subject with which the Lord engrossed their minds just met *their* necessities; shewing them how the king-

dom in mystery would be set during the absence of their rejected Lord.

Now the period of the *kingdom* here referred to must be looked upon as the time of the development of the purposes of God, from His rejection by the world in the person of His Son, to Christ coming again in glory, when the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father—a kingdom into which they are admitted, and none else. And this shews us the complete and entire disunion and dissociation of the children of God with the world.

What is the position of the world as it now stands? What is its natural positive position? It is in a state, not merely of hostility against God—not merely in its standing chargeable with alienation from all holiness, of open rebellion and outrage—but in a state of absolute exclusion from the presence of God, absolutely and definitely excluded from God's presence.

The word of God says, "He drove out the man." He had lost his innocence and purity, and was no longer fit to live in an innocent world. A plain precept had been given, and wilfully, and in defiance of God, broken. The matter of fact as to eating the fruit was simple, but involved momentous consequences.

Even the fact of its abstract littleness heightened the culpability of the offence; the action, *looked at in* itself, was trivial, and yet it

they differ? In this: they had not just the one thing, the one thing that fitted them to receive the Bridegroom. They were without the light wherewith to usher in the Lord; they wanted the very thing which could alone make them suitable companions for the Master; namely, the participation of the divine nature, the impartation of light, the indwelling of the Holy Ghost.

They wanted the fixedness of the affections wrought in the soul by the oil of gladness, the unction of the Spirit, which filled the soul of the wise virgins, and which waited but for the appearance of the Bridegroom to emanate in a flame of glory.

This was what they wanted; this is what the believer has; and this it is that makes the mighty difference between him and the world.

At midnight the cry came: the heavenly virgins arose though conscious of much weakness in themselves, they rise at the cry of their beloved; for there is that in them which answers to the cry. The foolish virgins trimmed their lamps, but their lamps failed to burn! And is there no remedy? None. According to the Saviour's awful declaration, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still."

) SPEAKING FROM HEAVEN.

(HEB. XII. 25.)

PAGES 48–60.

'he apostle, in addressing this exhortation he Hebrews, acted upon the ground of the .racter in which Christ spoke, and the conse- ences resulting therefrom. Observe: His aracter is specifically brought forward as eaking "from heaven," contrasted with His aracter as speaking on earth: "If they scaped not," &c. (that is, when He spake from Iount Sinai thundering out, His righteous aw), much more shall not we escape if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven.

Here is the contrast: Christ, as speaking now from heaven, and then on earth; an awful warning to transgressors; by the evidence of what then happened, to effect much more: "Whose voice *then* shook the earth." This having occurred sanctions the word spoken, which says, "Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken as of things that are made." And those things are what the saint is in now—not *of* them, but *in* them. Therefore is he, thus surrounded, warned not to turn away from Him "that speaketh from heaven."

This then is the ground on which he stands. On the one hand, he sees the full blessedness—

the unqualified hope—which this voice, speaking from heaven, makes known to him; and, on the other hand, he sees there is nothing else to rest upon but the word of Jesus, which is perfectly stable in that it has been tried and proved. This *cannot* be removed or shaken; everything, no matter what, that is not in association with this, being liable to be shaken, shall be removed. When the voice speaks from heaven, for the removal of all that opposes it, all that is not of this heavenly character must go.

This same speaking, then, implies the deep blessedness of the believer, and his not having anything else to rest on but Jesus.

"He then shook the earth." Tremendous was the sight. The mount was all on fire, and there was a very great earthquake. This was calculated to inspire great terror.

Here we have the character of the dispensation to which we, as believers, are called; it is spoken nominally of all the professing church, though only true of those who are alive to God. They have come to this: their warrant is, that this voice has spoken to them from heaven, and that they have heard it, and that it is the voice of Jesus.

Thus He is presented, as having entered into His glory, and from thence speaking.

Thus then we learn from this word that this *same* Jesus who spake on earth is now speaking *from* heaven.

His voice tells us that it is the same person, the same Christ, who was humbled for our sins; who went through the world, weary and sorrowful; the same man who was crucified, dead, and buried, raised, and ascended, that now speaks from heaven.

This then is the joy of the child of God, when he hears this voice of Jesus addressing him from heaven, testifying of what He *has* done.

It is a tale of mercy, of boundless, inconceivable mercy.

You may indeed have sorrow still as to *this* world; for you are in the very midst of that world which crucified and rejected Christ, the Lord of glory.

We may be bowed down, and think hard things of ourselves; but there Jesus sits, in the calmness of conscious victory, and His words are *only* words of peace.

Persecution, affliction, and woe may speak from earth; yet the voice from heaven speaks *nothing* but peace. The voice of the Lord Jesus is a voice of peace and conscious rest. Whatever conflicts with this peace is not in or from Jesus.

We may be tempted, harassed, oppressed; but, notwithstanding that, we are really come to "*the things that* cannot be shaken." "He that *joined to the* Lord is one spirit." This may

indeed be but dimly seen here, but it is not less real, and it is known to be real, by the power of the Spirit dwelling in them that believe.

Thus He now speaks from heaven one whole testimony of peace; it must necessarily be the voice of peace, being in the blessedness of the results of that which brought peace.

Man knew not peace while at enmity with his Maker; and so the Lord Jesus undertook the whole responsibility attaching to His people, and has overcome all impediments to obtain their peace. And this is the only way true peace can be obtained—this is what Jesus died to obtain, and, having obtained, now testifies to the truth and certainty of it.

See then that your eyes are fixed on Him that speaks from heaven, else you can never know peace; for, in very deed, it is the word of God.

We come now to see the stability of God's promise, and the certainty of its accomplishment: "Whose voice then shook the earth." "Yet once more," &c. Have we understood this voice from heaven? and do we rejoice in knowing that everything which Satan, the world, and the flesh have set up in opposition and enmity to God, shall be shaken terribly, even to their destruction?

But have I also heard the voice so speaking *to me* from heaven as to identify me with all *and* everything that cannot be shaken?

All things which are made shall be shaken. At that time, he who is associated with God, and he alone, shall stand the shake.

Here we see the total dissociation of all and everything connected with an interest in the things of this world; that they are opposed to the things of God—they are quite distinct, and never can be united.

The voice speaking from heaven proclaims the dissociation of Christ and His company from these—from all that is earthly.

THE WHEAT AND THE TARES.

(MATT. XIII.)

PAGES 61–76.

There is something wonderfully gracious in the way the Lord waits upon His people to instruct them: it is calculated to draw out the affections and minds of believers in love and gratitude.

God is blessing them *all* the way, and His mercy is exercised even in their wants.

The way in which He leads us, the particular circumstances in which we are placed, the situations we are in, are all so many methods and means of divine instruction planned by a God of love.

The believer longs for rest from all that now *offends, but* God leaves him here to teach hir

that sowed the good seed is the Son of man, the Lord Jesus Christ.

He sowed it. It was good seed He sowed, and He sowed it in His field; and this is the world. He was entitled to this field; it belonged to Him. This, then, is the simple fact: the world was His field; the field belonged to Jesus, and He sowed good seed in it—something that had not previously been in it—a something planted which was not indigenous to the soil.

This indeed, when once established, is calculated to overthrow the pride of vain man, who puts in his pretensions for a share; who calls the world his own; but it is not, it is God's; and every one who takes it as his own individual right, is meddling with things which belong not to him, and of which he must give an account to the rightful owner.

"While men slept, his enemy came, and sowed tares among the wheat." Here we have the character and circumstances under which the change came about; these men, these field-labourers, were put in trust, and the enemy brought in the evil seed while *these* men slept.

Oh! how little are men aware of the indefatigable perseverence of the enemy of souls! It is while men sleep he does the mischief.

There is a positive separation between the wheat and the tares! There is a wall of ever-

asting demarcation between them, we are not ensible enough of this.

The Lord makes His cause and His people's one; they are His, therefore *their* enemy is His. The saints look on this little word, "his enemy," with great delight.

"When the blade sprung up, then appeared the tares." This was the successful result of the enemy's work; they sprung up together There was not at first any outward distinction; they were all mixed up together. There was no remedy for *that*, as regarded the present state of things; instantly to set the world right was not in the mind of God.

"Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?" This is according to man's wisdom, who would set the world to rights again by plucking up and rooting out heretics, and purging out the wickedness according to their own desire.

"Nay," said the Lord, "there are circumstances existing at present which make this proposal impossible to be acceded to; they are now together and let them grow together. If I were to give you power now to pluck up the tares, you might unconsciously root up the wheat with them, which cannot be, let them grow together till the harvest."

The Lord has graciously explained the meaning of this word in verse 39: "The harvest is the end of the world [or age]."

"Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to *burn them:* but gather the wheat into my barn."

Here is the order: the tares are gathered in bundles to be burned; the wheat is lodged in the barn; the destruction of the tares, or their entire consumption, then takes place; and, finally, after their destruction, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

There are the tares then ripening, thinking no harm shall happen unto them; strengthening themselves in their iniquity, and counting the very providence of God (their being bound together in bundles) the very occasion of their strength and power, which is to prove their utter destruction. "Though hand goes in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished."

Is it any comfort to you that the wisdom of God will soon be seen in the world, to the destruction of all that oppose it? Would you like to have the world thus sifted, and all iniquity purged out?

Would it rejoice your heart to hear Jesus was now coming? In fact, would you like Him to come now? Oh! how sad, how very sad it is, that, when He is just about to come, and His saints about to be made entirely like Him, they should be mixed up in any way with the workers of iniquity, practising their habits, pursuits, or satisfactions.

HYMN.

"HOPE."

1881.

AND shall we see Thy face!
  And hear Thy heavenly voice,
Well known to us in present grace!
  Well may our hearts rejoice.

With Thee, in garments white,
  O Jesus, we shall walk;
And, spotless in that heavenly light,
  Of all Thy sufferings talk.

Close to Thy trusted side
  In fellowship divine,
No cloud, no distance, e'er shall hide
  Glories, that there shall shine!

Fruit of thy boundless love,
  That gave Thyself for us,
For ever, we shall, with Thee, prove
  That Thou still lov'st us thus.

And we love Thee, blessed Lord:
  E'en now, though feeble here,
Thy sorrows, and Thy cross, record
  What makes us know Thee near!

We wait to see Thee, Lord;
  Yet now, within our hearts
Thou dwell'st in love that doth afford
  The joy that love imparts.

Yet still we wait for Thee,
  To see Thee as Thou art!
Be with Thee, like Thee, Lord! and free
  To love with all our heart.

is a significant fact, acted on generally and admitted, that ıymns of the late beloved J. N. D. express more accurately ıdequately *than any* others, the full position and privileges both *ɔ individual saint* and the church of God, and especially our *ship with the* Father and His Son, and all it involves.—[ED.]

PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE PSALMS.

PSALM L.

Here, as to Israel, God does not complain want of sacrifices. No ceremonial religion w be in question, but wickedness. Because G had kept silence in long patience, the wor may fancy He is to be dealt with as man with outward forms and sacrifices, ceremonie and no conscience, and that God sees farther; but God sets before man *what he h done.*

PSALM LI.

Having to say to God Himself is what mar this psalm.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God." Gi it me, and renew (not a right, but) a fixe settled, spirit within me—one that calml settledly thinks on God, the heart's only obje and peacefully counts and waits on Him.

The soul thus taught cannot do without t presence of God. Its dread is to be cast out it. It is not yet intelligent in grace and t sureness of God's favour, but cannot do witho His presence. To be removed from it wou *be* everlasting misery. It craves therefore t *above* all, not to be cast out from His prese

When forgiveness is known (and specially when it is known with little depth of the conviction of sin), but the righteousness of God not, the soul losing the sense of forgiveness, through failure or carelessness, sees judgment before it, without having righteousness, and all previous joy becomes bitterness.

There is yet the case, where, with truth known, sin has been trifled with, and there the enemy gets power—a case I have already spoken of, where there is no power to apply the word, or promises, and every bitter sentence is applied to oneself. Yet, God's justice seen to be right, Satan, so to speak, is the interpreter of the word, not God, yet this God uses as chastisement, to set the soul right; and the soul, through grace, clings to God in spite of all.

The soul is not yet restored in the psalm, not free before God; it is looking for it. When restored, it can teach others freely.

A broken spirit is what suits the cross—suits Christ's broken body and forgiveness of sins. Nor does God despise this. It answers to His mind in the cross, to His grace towards the sinner. Then come peace, blessing, and service.

PSALM LII.

Evil boasts itself in power, but faith sees *another thing.* The goodness of God, before *whom men are* as grasshoppers, endures, how-

God is for us? I may not know what God will do, but He is trusted. God says He is mine helper.

PSALM LV.

Is the expression of intense distress of spirit. Outward enemies were there.

This was the hatred of those who stood in closest relationship to him. How completely the Lord Himself (though the Psalm be not properly prophetic of Him) went through this, I need not say.

What in man was to be trusted when the nearest betrayed? It gives isolation of heart. Nothing can be trusted. Now the Lord went through this power of evil.

The most terrible thing here is wickedness coming as the power of evil.

"*Cast* thy burden upon the Lord." Whatever the trial or difficulty may be, cast it upon the Lord. It is not that the trial goes always—here it would not till judgment came; but "He shall sustain THEE."

It is better than the trials going. It is the direct coming in of God to ourselves, to our own souls, the sense of His interest in us, His favour, His nearness, that He comes to help us in our need. *It is* a divine condition of the soul, which is *better* than any absence of evil. God is a sure *help to* sustain us.

The second point is the infallible faithfulness of God. He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved. Tried they may be, but He cannot suffer evil in the world to prevail, nor will He. We may learn to trust by the evil, but in trusting we know the Lord will keep, and the extreme character of the evil only shews the rather that God must come in—makes His intervention necessary.

PSALM LVI.

The soul has got out of the depths of inward distress in which it was in Psalm lv. Here God is at once before his soul. In truth, outward trials are little compared with inward breaches on the spirit. The spirit (even) of a man will bear his infirmities, but a wounded spirit who can bear ?

The worldly man may have fleshly resources against flesh. The saint cannot have recourse to these. It would take him away from God just when God is leading him wholly to Him. He cannot say "confederacy" to all to whom the people weak in faith say confederacy.

The saint can look, as it is beautifully expressed, to His putting every tear into His bottle. Every sorrow of the saint is in His book. It is a blessed thought.

So the heart confides in Him. Oh, that *saints knew how* to do it!

Another principle is found in this psalm (in a Jewish form, of course). The sense of belonging to, and being given up to, consecrated to, God. "Thy vows are upon me." We are apt to forget that we do not belong to ourselves.

The soul uses mercies and deliverances to count for more. It has been delivered from death; hence it looks to be kept from falling.

PSALM LVII.

There are the same trials, but more confidence. But his eye seeing more brightly God's power and help, it sees more of the evil and wickedness of its enemies and less of its own oppression, and this is constantly true.

We have to watch this, for our heart is treacherous. If it gets out of its own oppression and fear, it is apt to dwell *too much* on the wickedness of its enemies. Looking more at God, it must see this more. That is not the evil, but dwelling on it.

It is dangerous to merge evil and go on comfortably, but it is injurious also to dwell on evil. It does not nourish the soul—how should it?—and a spirit contrary to the gospel grows up. We shall see it if we are near God, but we shall soon be occupied with God and not with the evil. He is above it all.

Remark, too, that there is no thought of resisting the evil and getting rid of it by one's ow

·ength. It waits on God, and this it must do have its own path perfect. And this Christ d.

There is no thought of counter-planning. ıt, casting himself wholly on God, he sees eir own plans to be their ruin. This is a ;iking way of judgment and confirmation of ith. He gets through faith, so to speak, aise ready.

PSALM LVIII.

The wicked as such are hopeless as to amend-ent, but God will judge them; so that men ll see that there is a reward for the righteous ıd a God that judgeth the earth.

Is there upright, just judgment among men? the question. There is wickedness in their :arts: they plan and plot in it. It is in their :ture and will, and characterises itself by false-ıod. It is of the serpent, in its nature :vilish.

Vengeance—and this explains the joy in it—ıes come in, vindicates the just man and shews m right, however he may have seemed helpless ıd have been oppressed, and God righteous, ıd there is a judge in spite of oppression.

PSALM LIX.

It refers directly to the desired judgment of *heathen.*

Absence of all conscience and all heart is to be expected from the world when the Lord and His saints are in question; a terrible judgment, but which these psalms, as well as experience, prove to be true.

The simple refuge of the saint is in God. "God is my defence." It is not counter-plotting, nor using human means to meet the power of the enemy.

We may partially perhaps and for a time so succeed, but in using carnal weapons we have lost the dependence which calls God in, and the perfection of walk and testimony which waiting on Him gives.

The wickedness of the wicked is viewed as pure wickedness here. As between God and the saint there may be occasion for discipline, but between the saint and the wicked, the former had given no occasion to the malice of his enemy.

PSALM LX.

Is one which we can only apply in principle to our outward conflicts with the power of evil. There God can leave us as to His government for the time to defeat and scattering.

It is the deepest kind of chastening in these conflicts. For, as we serve in God's cause, we see that it is defeated on earth through our fault or failure. The feeling of grief and

distress is a genuine feeling, a feeling which must fill the heart of a servant of God.

It is a terrible thing to see those who stand in the place of God's people and witnesses put to the worse before their enemies, the cause of God for the moment defeated. God has given a banner to them that fear Him, to be displayed because of the truth. He has set His ensign among them, and it is terrible if with this they are defeated and driven back; if when saying Jehovah-Nissi, the enemy has the upper hand.

When it [faith] has to say, "Who will go out with our hosts?" it says, "Wilt not thou, O God, which hadst cast us off?" Then all is right.

PSALM LXI.

The soul is still removed from the enjoyment of present blessing. The heart is overwhelmed within itself.

He bows to God's hand; but he has a resource—God's leads Him to the rock that is higher than he. Faith gets to what is above circumstances, when nature is overwhelmed by them.

It is the contrast between God and circumstances, instead of between ourselves and circumstances. It is the secret of all peace in *trial, the Rock* higher than ourselves.

THE LIVING WATER.

(JNO. VII. 37–39.)

PAGES 32–46.

The Lord has prepared, and wonderfully given, that which is to be the very comfort and stay of our souls while in this wilderness: "He that believeth, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

Before this is set up in a believer, he has no refreshing perception of union with the living fountain.

Christ can cause you to overflow with the spiritual apprehension of His refreshing grace. He will make you so one with Himself, that the fountain, the inexhaustible fountain, which He contains, shall be so indwelling in you, as to be ever flowing, ever streaming, even in the wilderness: not keeping in, but flowing out in joyful acknowledgments of spiritual refreshment.

It was this that Christ promised He would give after His departure: "This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified."

This was the promise He gave on the last *day of* the feast — the promise of the Holy

Ghost, which "*should* be given to him that believeth."

The blessed Comforter was given for our refreshment in the wilderness.

What fills the soul of a Christian with bitterness is the practical experience that he is not yet come up out of the wilderness—that he is not yet in the glory. But, to refresh and comfort him, the Lord gives him within himself, and while here, those "living waters." "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

Could your hearts contain the thousandth part of that love which the Spirit could impart, your gratitude would overflow exceedingly, in the apprehension that, even in the desert you have constantly within you a witness of the overflowing fulness of Christ's love, the fulness of His fellowship, and the fulness of His joy.

Brethen, I would ask you, Are you grieving the Spirit? Are the things that you are occupied with such as would find a place amidst these living waters? Are your associations and desires capable of being assimilated with these pure streams, and together flow unruffled and untainted? Or are its operations restrained by your assimilation to what opposes it?

Have you deprived yourselves of the comfortable perception of His overflowing fulness within you, by gratifying "the old man"-

engaging in those things which the Spirit abhors —tempting Him to leave you low and barren? for where there is a cleaving to, and seeking of, the things of sense, it necessarily keeps us lifeless and languid, even sometimes as though there were no spirit in us at all.

Are you conscious there is in you this fulness —this overflowing fulness—from the glorification of Christ? Why are you *not* conscious of it? Only because you are *practically* disowning Him.

Oh! brethren, we are losing much of the joy and consolation of this divine Spirit, by our own inconsistencies, and love of what grieves Him.

ADAM AND CHRIST.

(Rom. v. 14–21.)

PAGES 77–91.

In the latter part of this chapter is exhibited, strikingly, the sin, and the consequences of that sin, wrought and incurred by Adam; and the grace that is manifested in Jesus Christ, as contrasted the one with the other.

Adam was placed in an innocent world, surrounded by every blessing, and with every holy and righteous feeling which could call forth his love and gratitude to the great Giver, and

which ought to have led him to confidence in Him. The Lord had placed trust in him: He put him as steward over His goods. He reflected His own image on him, and made him capable of holding converse with Himself: he was the link, as it were, between God and this world.

How did Adam comport himself, and sustain his integrity?

"Thou shalt not eat of the tree." He (man) knew it was a pledge of His obedience; that God, as supreme Sovereign, should have the satisfaction of being obeyed.

How did he act? He acted on the present enjoyment, without any regard to consequences; and the world has ever since acted precisely on the same principles, and precisely on the same grounds are they condemned.

The devil puts the present pleasantness of the thing before the man, and he cares not for the consequences; let those come on the man himself, so that he can lure him to his ruin. He never tells him "the wages of sin is death;" and man, with present enjoyments on view, cares not for it either.

"The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" have present enjoyment connected *with them*; so he (man) embraces them and *runs after* them; though in so doing, he

denies the truth of God, rejects His authority, and assumes His power.

This is really what Adam did; and in the consequences we are all naturally involved. He believed the devil rather than God; he thought the devil was truer than God. He put the devil's word in the place of the law of God; he looked upon God as an austere judge, and grudging; One who had a good thing to give him, and yet denied it to him, because He did not wish to make him as Himself, but rather was gratified in keeping it from him. This was the opinion man had of God, when he willingly subjected himself to the dominion of Satan.

Now let us view his conduct after he had sinned. What do we find him doing? Hiding himself—what else could he do? He would have been well pleased had there been no God to spy out his sin. But it was not so, and he was now confronted.

The voice of God called aloud, "Adam, where art thou?" He whom He had entrusted with so many blessings now runs away from Him, and hides himself; he had disputed the authority of God, and sold himself to the devil, and withal involved all his posterity in the guilt of rejecting God as a Sovereign, and taking the devil as a god, and bowing down in submission to his will.

And in this position is the world at present,

in which we are now living, the only living instance of unpunished apostasy; the consequences are to come. But man is the only intelligent being who is still alive in successful apostasy. What do we find in the case of the fallen angels? Their sin brought immediate and irremediable punishment. Man—man alone is abiding in unbelief; condemned indeed, but still the sentence of execution is suspended.

We rest on God's truth when we declare there is no excuse that man makes which is not, in fact, the very ground of his condemnation, yea, the very reason of it.

"The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the fruit, and I did eat." The very excuse he brings is the very ground on which God condemns him. "Because thou hast hearkened unto thy wife. . . . Cursed is the ground for thy sake." Thus out of his own mouth was he judged.

Now we pass to the second Man—the character and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and we shall see exactly the opposite of this in every particular.

We shall see how in thought, word, and deed He perfectly vindicated the truth, love, and majesty of the great God of heaven, which man had thus shamefully and wilfully dishonoured.

How did He vindicate the *truth* of God?

The Lord had said, "Thou shalt surely die." Christ came as the great witness to His people that "the wages of sin is death"; and that by imputation only, for He was perfectly and entirely holy. But He *took* our sins; He bore our iniquities. He was willing to be looked upon as the guilty, and to bear the penalty God had annexed to sin, "Thou shalt surely die," in order to vindicate the truth of God.

If any on earth could be spared the threatened punishment it was Jesus. Holy in all respects, abstractedly of His divinity; entirely free from sin or approximation to it; without the slightest shadow of evil as it regarded Himself, and yet by imputation, willing imputation, His: if any could be spared, it was He. But, no; God had said it, and Christ came to bear witness to the truth of God's word.

If we would see the bitterness of sin, the tremendous consequences of it, and its utter hatefulness in the sight of God, where shall we see it but in the death of Christ, God's fellow, His well-beloved Son? "He spared not his Son;" He delivered Him up to the death of the cross.

We see again how fully He vindicated the *love* of God. That God, whom man looked upon as a grudging God, keeping back from him that which was desirable, *that* God gave *His* only begotten Son for man's transgression!

He needed not to die for His own offences for He had committed none; nor for His own sins, for He "knew no sin." He was brought nevertheless to the extremity of suffering and shame, and yet trusted and confided in God, in circumstances all opposite to those in which Adam was placed.

Christ was in the midst of poverty, degradation, and woe; so that He could say, "Reproach hath broken my heart. I am full of heaviness. My soul is exceeding sorrowful." "My heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of my bowels." "Dogs compassed me. Bulls of Bashan closed me in on every side." "I am poured out like water."

In the very moment when God was to visit on His soul the most awful effects of His people's delinquency—when, for their sins and the salvation of their souls, that they might everlastingly enjoy the presence of God's countenance, He was to withhold the comfortable perception of it from His expiring Son; when, at the extent and summit of such dreadful agony, the exclamation was drawn from His holy soul, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" yet is the language of His soul, "But *thou continuest* holy, O, thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel;" even in the moment of extremest sufferings a *doubt* of God's faithfulness never passed His holy mind.

All mankind are naturally and truly associated with the first Adam, and all Christ's people are as naturally associated with Him; "Complete in him."

As certainly as we are by nature united to the first Adam, and bearing his likeness and image, so surely, if we are believers, we are associated with Christ in everything, "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ."

LIFE IN RESURRECTION.

(Col. iii. 1–4.)

PAGES 92–106.

The great principle upon which a Christian stands is as to what is his life, and from whence it flows. The Christian is said to be raised from the dead—to have risen with Christ; and whatever is not thus quickened and risen is not of Christ. "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

All blessing and comfort is associated with this life in resurrection. There is the entering on a new position, and setting aside for ever all previous and natural situation.

Now, where an individual is not in this position, it is just to be under all his trespasses and sins—to have them upon himself. He is a *sinner*, as all are; but *he* is nothing else than a

sinner in thought, principle, affection, and standing; all *that* he is, and he is nothing else.

Perhaps he may not outwardly have manifested as much sin as others. He may have been restrained by regard to decorum; he may not have been placed in such circumstances as to draw it out equally with others. He may not have had the opportunity as others of appearing as great a sinner, but still he is a sinner, and nothing else. If he has committed, in thought, word, or act, *one sin*, that is the evidence that he is a sinner, as one bad fruit evidences the unsoundness of the tree.

Where did he get the *inclination* to transgress? No union of outward circumstances could have brought forth what was not within.

Now there is no association of principle with God as long as man remains in that state; but it decidedly manifests his departure from God.

There is one grand sin which leads men to the commission of all others—the desire to please themselves.

If this has once been acted on, it constitutes that man a sinner; just as the breach of one law of the land stamps a man a criminal. We do not require him to run through the transgression of every law in the statute book in order to bring him in guilty; his having broken one is the evidence of his guilt. We need no further *proof.*

Now this is the real fact, that there is no assimilation to God in man's natural state; but the contrary principle—hatred, enmity.

If so, we are at present without God in the world; and to be for ever without Him is perfect misery. And is not this really the present position of the world, though they are unconscious of it? There is a veil cast on futurity, as it regards them. They are occupied in the pleasures, amusements, profits, and pursuits of a Christ-rejecting world. But when the veil is raised, then will their position be disclosed. And whatsoever is of Christ will have Christ's portion; they will enter on the enjoyment of that portion, which by faith now they see is prepared for them.

By faith alone have we any of these exceeding great promises *now*.

There must have been some great concern passing between heaven and earth; some wonderful transaction pending between God and man; some immense negotiation which was now to be decided, sufficient to awaken the world, and into which the very "angels desire to look." There must have been a something great and tremendous to have had such consequences attached to it; to have seen Him of whom the Father's testimony was, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well *pleased*," and yet, "pleased to bruise him"!

When this great mystery is understood (and none but a believer can enter into the spiritual perception of it) the soul is brought out of a state of death and darkness, and is translated into life and light. It then sees and feels what it was that caused the Father to bruise Him, and the Son willing to be bruised.

And now, what were all these sufferings about? *Sin.* Sin was the cause of all, and such sin as to draw down such fearful consequences on the bearer of it—how tremendous!

If you can say, "It is not so with me; I do not think myself so bad as to draw down such heavy judgments upon me individually; I am not worse than others, and sin is not such a grief to me;" then assuredly all these sufferings and agony and woe cannot be manifestly about you.

Having seen what we belonged to as the heirs of the first Adam, "by nature children of wrath, even as others," we now see our entrance on another position as heirs of the second Adam.

There is more truth in God's life than in man's life: it is not a name, a voice, a notion, but *eternal* life, that very life which Christ has now, that very life which is without end, that we have. "He that hath the Son, *hath* life;" he has it *now*, there is no such thing as *shall*, as *regards our* possession of it.

say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." (Luke xii.)

He washes their feet by removing from them everything that hinders their enjoyment of fellowship with Himself and the Father; because our earthly nature and all contact with a defiling world continually interrupt this enjoyment.

"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet." How are we to fulfil this? As Christ does in His heavenly glory. I noticed the way in which Christ washed His disciples' feet, when He was in the world. He patiently endured all their infirmities, errors, and defects that He might intercede for them, and remove from their hearts and minds everything that defiled them.

"Ye also ought to wash one another's feet;" in the same manner, patiently enduring their ignorance, errors, weaknesses, defects, any defilement that cleaves to them, patiently enduring it, I say, that we might be the means of removing it.

We should also pray for them, pray for their deliverance from everything that defiles and troubles them; like our Lord and Master, ever meek, patient, compassionate, and tender in our conduct towards them.

UNFOLDINGS OF GLORY.

During Mr. Darby's residence in Pau, in the years 1879–81, the thought of hymns addressed to "The Father" was much present to his mind.

1881.

O LORD! Thy glory we behold,
  Though not with mortal eyes:
That glory, on the Father's throne,
  No human sight descries!

But though the world can see no more
  Him it cast out with scorn,
The eye of fresh-born faith can soar
  Above, where He is gone.

'Tis not for human eye to see,
  Nor human ear to hear,
Nor heart conceive what it may be,
  Or bring the prospect near;

But God, in love has freely given
  His Spirit, Who reveals
All He's prepared, for those in heaven
  Whom here on earth He seals.

'Tis thence, now Christ is gone on high,
  Redemption's work complete,
The Spirit brings His glory nigh,
  To those who for Him wait.

Blest gift! As sons we look above,
  And see the Saviour there;
And, fruit of God's now well-known love,
  We shall His glory share!

God has been glorified in Man;
  Man sits at God's right hand;
Obedient in the race He ran,
  Can now all power command!

In lowliness on earth, as Son,
  The Father He made known;
And now, in heaven, His work all done,
  He sits upon His throne!

And we our great Forerunner see,
  In His own glory there;
Yet not ashamed—with such as we,
  As first born all to share.

For we, as sons, through grace are own'd,
  And "Abba, Father" cry;
Heirs too, so rich did grace abound,
  Joint-heirs with Him on high!

The Father's love, the source of all,
  Sweeter than all it gives,
Shines on us now without recall
  And lasts while Jesus lives.

The new creation's stainless joy
  Gleams through the present gloom,
That world of bliss without alloy,
  The saints eternal home!

It is a significant fact, acted on generally and admitt the hymns of the late beloved J. N. D. express more acc and adequately than any others, the full position and privileg of the individual saint and the church of God, and especi fellowship with the Father and His Son, and all it involves.-

PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE PSALMS.

PSALM LXII.

Waiting on God is the subject of this psalm. It implies dependence, confidence; and both in such sort that we abide God's time: dependence, because we cannot do anything without Him, and ought not, because what He does is what the soul alone desires, because action without Him, even in self-defence, is only the action of our own will, and so our being without God so far.

Saul did not wait upon God. He waited nearly seven days; but if he had felt he was dependent, and nothing could be done without God, he would have done nothing till Samuel came. He did not; he acted for himself, and lost the kingdom.

Deliverance from God is sweet; it is love; it is righteous holy deliverance; it becomes the revelation of the favour and grace of God. It is perfect in time, way, place.

But it implies confidence too; for why should we wait if God would not come in? The soul is thus sustained meanwhile. And this confidence is such we tarry the Lord's leisure. Patience has its perfect work, so that we

should be perfect and complete in all the will of God.

This leaves the soul absolutely and exclusively waiting on Him. It is not active for itself; it waits only upon God.

This does not suppose there is not exercise and trial of heart; or indeed waiting upon God would not have to be called for. But God is faithful. He is full of goodness and tender love to those who wait upon Him.

He is always a refuge for the heart; and the heart realises what He is when deliverance is not come: and in some respects this is more precious than deliverance itself. But it supposes integrity.

The effect of thus waiting on God's deliverance is to make us know that it will be perfect and complete when it does come. "I shall not be moved."

PSALM LXIII.

Supposes the full knowledge of the blessings of relationship with God, but not the full enjoyment of those blessings; on the contrary, that he who thus knows them is in a place entirely the contrary of all their blessedness.

The thing sought and the thing desired, is not the blessing but God Himself, and the revelation *of His* glory where He dwells.

Thirst and desire after God longs to see Him possessing His full power and glory, and must.

The nature which is of God would have none but Him; and would earnestly have Him.

The fact that it (the soul) is where there is not one drop of what can refresh it, as is the case in this world, only renders this longing after Him more intense.

His lovingkindness, His grace, His favour, and goodness, are felt by the soul. The sense of them rests upon it. This is better than life, which means life here, the present enjoyment of this world.

Hence, in the sense of this loving-kindness, in a dry and thirsty land his lips praised God. This is very sweet; and, note, it is perfect in its nature, because it is simply God; for in the land the saint is in, there is absolutely nothing. God, his God, is his desire; His lovingkindness is the refreshing of his soul.

His whole life in the dry land is in spirit out of it. Nothing attracts his soul in it at all.

But there is perfect happiness and satisfaction of heart when separated from the turmoil of the world, and when nothing is there to engage the flesh's attention. The soul finds in God Himself the fullest and richest food. The soul is satisfied, *does not* want anything else, when it

can be thus alone with God, in which is its delight, but is filled with it.

The delights of the heart are created and satisfied with the revelation of God Himself. God is essentially delighted in and enjoyed. And as the soul is full, so it overflows in praise; the mouth praises with joyful lips.

The sense of His goodness and active interest in the soul is a source of sweet joy to it. The soul rejoices in having this divine favour its refuge, and actively interested in securing it. It follows hard after God.

PSALM LXIV.

Shews a peculiar course of things in the world, yet one with which every one exercised in the service of God in this world is familiar—that of the wicked, who hate righteousness, seeking to charge evil on the upright.

This shews the universality and power of conscience, and another truth too—that the principles of those who trust God and confess His name are expected to produce what is purely good. This is really the strongest witness to the principles of faith on the one hand, and to the utter wickedness of the human heart on the other.

The wicked recognise that faith ought to produce, and, as its own proper fruit, does *produce* what is right and perfect, and expects

it from him who walks by faith. But they shew their hatred of that principle, and of those who cleave to the Lord by it, by searching out iniquity and inconsistency.

This is a terrible proof of the wickedness of the world; and yet it is universal, not only found, yea, not so much found among the openly ungodly as in decent unbelievers.

Their tongues are the instruments of attack and injury. The saint has no outward defence or remedy; but as to this, as with regard to violence, God is his refuge.

Remark, he speaks of the fear of the enemy. This malice tends to produce fear. The godly is no equal match for it, he can use no weapon against it. He leaves it to God in representing it to Him.

God exercises His saints; but in result the wicked bring His judgment on their own heads, and even fear and see and own God's work. For this the godly must wait, and then joy will be complete, though their deliverance, being a divine one, must wait till the time of judgment arrives.

PSALM LXV.

Refers directly to the blessing of this creation, and the praise and joy which will spring forth when He sets aside the power of evil.

It *looks, for the* groaning creation waits, not

only for Israel as here, but much more in order to its deliverance, for the manifestation of the sons of God, for the blessing of God's people, that this universal blessing may take place.

But this psalm again applies only to the circumstances of the believer. The Christian is never, *according to the Spirit*, in a state of soul in which he cannot praise. His heart may have got away from God, so that the Spirit has to rebuke him and humble him, but then praise is not ready at all.

Here the thought is that, though the heart be ready, circumstances do not furnish occasion to praise. Praise is silent, though there is the consciousness that praise belongs to God; the vow will be performed. This may be the Christian's case. He may say in trying circumstances, I am sure I shall yet praise and thank Him for deliverance. And this is a right spirit. As to our highest praise, this is always the case.

PSALM LXVI.

There is one great point in this psalm as to its moral force which is of great interest to notice, the way in which, when deliverance comes, all is ascribed to God. And God is seen all through. It goes back to original redemption, the unequivocal source of all (verse 6), while the final blessing of God's people is the blessing *of the* world.

God is seen in the trouble itself, and as the author of it, though our failure may have been the occasion of it. This is the true test of the heart being right, what is called (as to Israel in Leviticus) accepting the punishment of our iniquity.

Two things are seen in it: God brought them into the trouble; He held their soul in life through it.

God sends the trouble, preserves the soul in it, purges the soul by it as silver, brightens its hope which rests more entirely on Him, and looks with purer eye for what He has promised, and then brings out into a wealthy place.

PSALM LXVII.

The glory of God is the spring of the desire of the heart for blessings, even on His people. Then blessings flow out, and praise goes up to God. This psalm explains Romans xi. 15.

PSALM LXVIII.

It is specially God's character as regards the Jews in grace, but in His own sovereign grace; not in covenant relationship, but as establishing them, as once in Sinai, only now in grace and power.

Jah is not the same as Jehovah, I am fully persuaded. It is the absolute existence of God, not His continuous existence, so as to reckon

In the sanctuary the will is silenced, and God is listened to. His ways are right, and we see things with His eye. The evil is worse, the compassion right, the patience adorable, yet the judgment sure.

The judgment is righteous because patience is perfect—far more terrible because there is no passion in it. It refers to God.

When God awakens in His own good time, they are as a dream. Their pride, pretensions, all is as a departed image. Faith has to believe this, and leave them there.

He had been foolish, ignorant—"as a beast," so he says, "before God"; yet there had been integrity and conscience. If he had let his thoughts loose when half disposed to say godliness was no use, he would have offended against the generation of God's children. This checked him. How beautiful to see in the waywardness of man's will these holy affections, this conscience of putting a stumbling block in the path of the weakest of God's children, check the heart, and shew where the affections really are, and that fear of God which shews He is lovingly known!

But what he knows of himself is that he was as a beast in his heart's reasoning as it did. But, then, mark what is seen. He comes to see that, in spite of all this, while owning his folly, *He was* continually with God.

Up to this, through all his shortcoming in faith, he could say, "Thou has holden," now he says, as in communion, "Thou wilt guide me by thy counsel." This is not merely holding up unconsciously; it is the mind and will of God guiding us in communion.

In one sense the heart accepts the dominancy of evil, and is blessedly abstracted from all to God. See thus the blessing of this seeming evil. Were all peaceful and good, prosperous in the present and imperfect state of things, the heart would sink into that imperfect state and be really worldly; but the prevalence of evil, though pressing on the spirit (the will checked by the feeling that one cannot dissociate oneself from God's people), drives to the sanctuary of God.

The heart is weaned from this world, and, in a world where evil does prevail, looks up to God, has Himself for its portion alone in heaven, and so nothing along with Him on the earth. He holds the sovereign place in the heart. Nothing competes with Him at all. As in the New Testament, "Christ is all."

ON THE PHILIPPIANS.

PAGES 533–577.

THE Epistle of the Philippians looks at the Christian as on a journey with an object before him, and that object—the actual winning of

Christ, the laying hold of that for which he had been laid hold of by Christ; and therefore salvation is looked at as a thing to be attained, the Christian reaching in result what he had laid hold on before by faith.

We do not get sin mentioned throughout the epistle.

It is beautiful to see how Christ is the sole object before the apostle.

I would first notice the way in which people have blundered with reference to verse 12 chapter ii., which they think conveys the idea of a person working himself to obtain eternal life in contrast with God's working, insisting on the words "work out your own." It is altogether mistaken.

The apostle had been with them, and had cared for them, had worked for them, kept at bay the power of the enemy, meeting the difficulties of the warfare.

But this was not to continue; he now being in prison, and having left them, they had to work out their own salvation. That is, they would now have to fight their own battles, and have their own conflicts, which Paul felt was a very solemn thing: they were to do it "with fear and trembling."

And I am sure we shall all feel it a solemn thing, if we have a right apprehension of it,

when we think of the great powers that are against us—the world, the flesh, and Satan.

It is indeed a solemn thing to know that we are the vessels of a conflict between God and Satan. But it is no contrast between our working and God's; but our working and Paul's, who could no longer be in the conflict for them, but who adds, It is God who worked in them to will and to do—they had not lost Him.

When scripture speaks of my place in Christ as the result of accomplished redemption, there are no "ifs," or "buts," or wavering about it. These come when it looks at me as a Christian in the world under responsibility.

Paul counts all dross and dung that he might win Christ. Oh, what single-eyed energy for Christ! You see if Christ is so precious to me that everything else is dung and dross, it will be no difficulty to me to throw it aside; that is the secret—the power of an absorbing object to deliver me from all else.

It is to the extent that my heart values an object that it is a temptation to me.

Suppose I had a very beautiful cloak on, and I am running a race: if my heart is really occupied with the prize, I shall not mind the beauty of the cloak. I shall only know it is a weight, and shall cast it off me, as we find in Hebrews, "Laying aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset."

Note, this was not a mere passing effect with Paul, when the glory of Christ first gleamed in upon him ; but at the end of his course he could say, "And I do count them dung that I may win Christ." He kept up to it all through his course ; and we shall do the same just to the extent our minds are on the prize ; and first of all the prize to him was winning Christ Himself.

Paul says, It does not matter what I pass through, whether death or anything else, so that I may get Him. "If by any means"—no matter what (ver. 11), if it costs me my life—"I might attain unto the resurrection from among the dead"—not "of the dead," but "from among the dead."

This was the difficulty in Mark ix. 10. They reasoned what the resurrection from the dead meant. A general resurrection of the dead was enough : every Pharisee, or orthodox Jew, held it ; but one from the dead was a new thing altogether, and this is the character of the saint's resurrection.

God delighted in Christ, and therefore raised Him from among the dead. He also delights in us, and is going to raise us from among the dead.

We run a race, but not an uncertain one.

The rest of the epistle is simply experience—*sitting* loose to the world, caring about nothing

but Christ, superiority over all circumstances; and the apostle concludes, "My God shall supply all your need"—*my* God, the One whom I have been learning, I count upon for all your wants.

GOD WITH US.

(ROM. VIII. 31.)

PAGES 123–139.

There is much to weary us, much to draw out our anxiety as to present circumstances here; and there is much as regards the natural mind which shrinks from God. The natural conscience of a man, even while he is engaged in the things of this life, only testifies to him that all is not right; he may not always, perhaps not often, feel this silent monitor; business, pleasure, gratification may dissipate the thought that there is something coming he is not prepared for.

But though unwelcome, the thought will obtrude, and weary him, and make him uneasy, particularly if he is externally seeking righteousness; he will be very weary to find he has not courage to meet what he knows he cannot avoid. Nay, even he who disclaims all outward regard to what is right, who is on the broad road of sin and ruin, delighting himself in abounding in iniquity, even in his very hey-

day of enjoyment and sport, an uneasy thought will at some time or another be felt which tells him, "This won't do, this is not the end for which I was made; there is something coming."

Perhaps he may not experience this while in the very act of his jovial pleasures, but when alone, a word that has been dropped either in discourse, or in conversation, or something he has read, or a passing circumstance, will force him to acknowledge, "Well, after all, that is the truth, whether I believe it or not, this short life must end in a coming judgment, and I am not prepared for it."

This feeling of uneasiness and alarm will obtrude on the mind. The very thought of a God who hates the things he is doing every hour in the day is a thought fraught with alarm.

Now, I suppose there is no person who has heard the gospel preached, who has not at one time or another been made thus uneasy. This leads him to the consideration of one great thing, which in some moment of time he experiences, "Well, perhaps after all, God may be against me."

It is this that makes the sinner alarmed; and he whose conscience is greatly troubled, who feels his weakness, and finds the difficulty by which he is surrounded, his secret feeling is,

God is not at peace with me—He is against ıe."

There is the great truth, the great cause of ontroversy in the conscience, there is no peace. No matter what are his circumstances, they ıay vary and change, but will make no change ı what makes him thus uneasy; for it is the ame calm, unchanging God he has to meet, nd he is conscious God is not at peace with im, and he cannot say, "I know, come what ill, God is for me."

It is this that makes the natural conscience remble and feel uneasy.

The scripture tells us that the conscience hen once enlightened sees that God has met ll this in a manner peculiar to Himself—that He met all that a man's conscience can make ut against himself, and He met it in such a vay as to make a man conscious of possessing eace in the Lord Jesus Christ; and it is really vonderful—wonderful beyond our utmost limits f comprehension—when, amidst all our misery, legradation, sinfulness and weakness, God is ound to be for us.

What shall we say to these things? "If God be for us, who can be against us?" When a man sees God thus settling the uestion between them, suiting Himself to his eculiar circumstances, and proving Himself to e for him, he has a more realising sense of

God's favour towards him, than the angels in heaven that never sinned.

When a man is brought to see *God for him*, there is a breaking down of all that before opposed itself to God: pride, the poor pride of man, is brought down, when once he is brought to the conscious acknowledgment, "*God is for us.*" The soul then sees how completely *every thing is for him*, if *God is thus for him.* The comfort of this soul consists in this, and that it is *for God:* then it begins to be conscious of other wants, of which before it knew nothing.

It wants to know more of God, it wants to see Him as He is, it wants the glory. It is a comfort to know that this is what it wants. The soul is led to ask now, Why should *God be for us?* Have we been *for God?* have we rendered God any service? Have we acted by His mind? We have not. Why then should we plead, *God is for us?* It is for nothing in ourselves, for we have slighted His promises, despised His grace, lightly esteemed the more than ten thousand mercies of His daily favour. Seeing such to be the case we see no reason why *God should be for us.* Why should we expect *God to be for us?* What has the world done for God?

What has it done with its natural blessings? sinned them away; with the law of God? *broken it*; with the love of Christ and His

coming? rejected Him; with the testimony of the Holy Spirit to the work of Christ?

There is no real reason from us on earth why *God should be for us*, but, as far as we are concerned, every reason why He should be against us.

Being in this position, there is one terrible evil necessarily evident: that if we are living without God, not following Him, we must be followers of him who is the enemy of God and of our own souls; who is the great deceiver of mankind, and though he never shews himself, drags his victims down to ruin, and then mocks at their calamity.

This is Satan, that arch deceiver, a liar and a murderer from the beginning.

There is one great thing as regards the unconverted man; he stands in dread of the holiness of God. He cannot contemplate God's glory with delight, but in that glory he must stand, if ever he is saved; he may be changed, and must be changed, if ever he meet with joy; but that glory changes not.

Were it possible for God to give up one atom of His glory, or one particle of His holiness, the effect would be that there would be no place where sin would not enter. Who can tell what would be the consequence if God could suffer the least diminution of His glory? Where is the spot that would then be sacred?

If it really be true that God's glory cannot change, who then can be saved?

It is not, it cannot be, pleasant to the natural mind to contemplate the judgment. No man likes to be judged; it is not natural to man; he does not like to have this sounded in his ears, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment," that is the fact; therefore, he is always putting it off. Putting off what? God's presence. He does not want to see God.

Oh, what blessing, what wondrous blessing, is thus brought home to the poor, aching, harassed, anxious soul, when it is given to see that God whom it despised, that Jesus whom it crucified, that Spirit whom it resisted, *are for it.*

"In due time Christ died for the ungodly." This is the thing that brings peace and joy to the soul: this is what sets the devil aside.

What a relief it is, after many experiences of deeper and deeper misery in the consciousness of sin and anxiety, to be relieved from it.

None are excluded from the privilege, who will plead they are ungodly; and this is so simple as to be intelligible to the poor and ignorant, as to the rich and wise, and perhaps even more intelligible, for this very reason, that they are poor and ignorant, and that they are *dealing* with God in their consciences only, and

the others are endeavouring to deal with Him by their knowledge. But God, who is rich in mercy, can bring to nothing the wisdom of the wise, and make them see their want of wisdom.

When the Spirit of God brings to the soul of a sinner that he is ungodly, and that he has an interest in the death of the Son of God, he is conscious of being in Him as a risen Saviour, and has therefore ample encouragement for the future. He sees One by faith come down from heaven. He sees God determined to save him.

He had a purpose, a holy purpose of love, which He came to execute here, and nothing could divert Him from that purpose. He was pledged to perform it, and therefore on He went, amidst all scorn, reproach, poverty, and contempt. The settled purpose of His heart was to save the ungodly, and so He despised all that was in the way of its accomplishment: He despised the cross enduring the shame.

It was God did all this, and *He is for me.*

He [the sinner] is now no longer too proud to be a debtor to God; the arms of his rebellion and enmity are laid down, he becomes a suppliant. He need no longer fear the day of judgment, nor be troubled, his cause is made out, and he stands acquitted.

This is the great truth that brings joy, peace and *comfort, that in* all these things God is for

us! O, what rest, what happiness for the poor soul, when he sees he has to do with One who has conquered all his enemies for him, and in whom he has treasured up all the glory for him.

To enter into the full perception of this blessedness constitutes the enjoyment of the believer.

Christ is ours, and then it follows, all is ours, "for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." God therefore gives all things with Christ; not as man gives, for God gives freely. "He freely giveth all things." The difficulties in one way may continue.

Who shall separate us from His love? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or peril, or sword?" Shall the deceitful pleasures of a false world, or the alluring bait of Satan tempt our souls to destruction? Nay, "in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

What the devil did was to undo our confidence in God. What Jesus did is to shew us that we may trust Him.

When our eyes are off all other objects, and on Christ, then, and then only, we can have peace.

Be decided, cut short all expedients for deferring the bold acknowledgment of your being *His*; confess Him before men and act for

Him, and live for Him in an ungodly world. He is not ashamed to call you brethren; and will you be ashamed to confess Him as your Lord and Master in the face of all the world?

Be not debating within yourselves, when you shall avow yourselves; do it at once, decidedly. Make the plunge, and trust God for the consequence. I know it by experience, that an open, bold confession of being Christ's is more than half the struggle over.

I know the devil tempts, and says, "O, do not be too hasty: you might ruin the cause by over-forwardness; this is not the time to confess yourself openly; wait for another opportunity."

But I say, as one who knows, that if a man, in the strength of the Lord, is just brought to say to his companions and friends, "I am Christ's, and I must act for Him," that he will not suffer what others will feel who are creeping on, fearful and afraid, to avow Him whom they desire to serve.

Believe me, it is as I say, by this decided and open opposition to the world: he may at first be laughed at, and mocked, but what of that? Christ was served so. But soon, when his companions find him resolute, they will give him up as a bad case which they can make no hand of, and they will leave him comparatively free from ridicule.

Are there any of you halting between two opinions, and afraid to confess your obligation to the Lord? Oh, I once more entreat you to be candid. Be open, be decided, confess Christ's name on earth, and He will not be ashamed to confess your name before the whole assembled universe.

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

(PSA. XXII. 22.)

PAGES 178–190.

The whole of this psalm evidently contains the words and experience of the Lord Jesus Christ. It begins with one of His most momentous sentences, as if a direct quotation from prophecy: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and gives the very words of the infidel Jews, when Jesus was expiring on the tree, "He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him." (Ver. 8.)

The whole psalm is an accurate scene of our Lord's sufferings. In the verse preceding the text, His agony of soul is described, "Save me from the lion's mouth." (Ver. 21.)

In the concluding part ("Thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorn"), we have *Him* brought to the crisis of extreme suffering

on the very horns of the altar, as describing the sacrifice bound and laid on.

Immediately after His delivery, He exclaims, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren."

There were three things which the Lord Jesus had to encounter and to triumph over, and which were ever before Him—death, guilt, and the power of Satan.

The enjoyment He possessed was incomplete until the knowledge of it was communicated to them whom He had made part of Himself.

"I will declare thy name unto my brethren;" as if He had said, "I will come and make known to your souls, my brethren, the victory I have attained over all your enemies, and the consequences resulting from it, as standing perfectly justified. And in this full position of acquittal all His people stand.

Here we see the perfectness of His love; having removed their sin and guilt, He makes Himself one with them—He calls them His own brethren: "I will declare thy name unto my brethren." "He is not ashamed to call them brethren."

How wondrous is that manifestation of His anxiety and willingness to make known immediately to His brethren His deliverance, and consequences of it to them!

There He stands in the midst of them a their glorious and triumphant Head—they ar His—they are not of the world. He sai Himself—even as I am not of the world.

They are no longer in connection with tl world; they have done with it, as a rule of li or conduct; its fashions, pursuits, customs, ar desires, no longer guide them; they are led the Spirit, and choose the things the Spi delights in.

The believer sees Christ brought into tl "dust of the earth," but he also hears Hi after His conquest, in the midst of His churc declaring the Father's perfect satisfaction ai pleasure.

The world never praises God; it knows n how; it knows Him not, and never can knc Him by its own wisdom. "The world by wisdc knew not God;" but Christ's brethren knc Him, and praise Him. They cannot but prai when they hear Christ saying, "I have c clared thy name unto my brethren, and w declare it, that the love wherewith thou ha loved me may be in them, and I in them."

Can it be possible that you still love tl world? that you are still fond of the wor which hated Christ and drove Him out of it?

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

CLOSING VOL. I. OF "WEIGHTY WORDS," 1898.

NOW *that the year 1898 is closing*, and Volume I. of "WEIGHTY WORDS" is thereby completed, I beg, as Editor, to thank the readers of the "Magazine," and those who spread it.

The former will have by this time, perceived the the simplicity and aim of the work.

The aim of it, is to give the pith of each article dealt with, the real scope and intent of the article, without introducing side issues not distinctly proper to it. It is by no means intended only to give isolated passages, however beautiful, which have no connection with each other or the subject matter in hand.

The one thing which it is *not intended* to do, is to raise controversy on points of doctrine, or exposition, or to supply matter for such. The one thing it *is intended* to do, is to help souls, in their practical path down here.

The beloved J. N. D. lived a holy separate life, and God revealed to him, by His word and by His Spirit, *all the great truths* which we specifically hold. They were *lost* to Christendom, he *recovered them.* But it is not the setting forth especially even of these that is the aim of "WEIGHTY WORDS," but rather, what there is in these writings, in dealing with them, that help the soul in its practical path, and in exercising the conscience and heart.

This beloved J. N. D. did in a remarkable manner, even in stating the most simple truths, for example, "Christ is in you; how are you treating such a Guest?" His writings on various subjects abound in thousands of such things.

From time to time, and from here and there, I have received letters from some who tell me they have received blessing from this magazine. God be praised!

These letters have been mostly received from poor, and *especially sick folk*, *bedridden*, and the like. One, curiously enough, from a missionary at the memorable "Rorke's Drift," in Africa.

This has been a great comfort to me—being myself a sufferer, and an invalid—to know that God has been pleased to use the little book to the comfort and blessing of some. It is joy and sweetness to know it.

The work is a great pleasure to me. If any receive or know of blessing received through "WEIGHTY WORDS" and would let me (if led of God) know of it, I should esteem it a great kindness.

Should any require numbers, for distribution, gratis, a post card to the Editor's address would at once secure them.

May we all await the coming of the Lord during 1899, and may we at least desire to be devoted in affection and worship, and consequently diligent in service.

We are thankful that the circulation of "WEIGHTY WORDS" is steadily increasing.

F. F. RANGER,
(Editor.)

LOVE DISPLAYED.

During Mr. Darby's residence in Pau, in the years 1879–81, the thought of hymns addressed to "The Father" was much present to his mind.

1881.

We'll praise Thee, glorious Lord!
  Who died to set us free:
No earthly songs can joy afford
  Like heavenly melody.

Love, that no suffering stayed,
  We'll praise true love divine;
Love, that for us atonement made;
  Love, that has made us Thine.

Love, in Thy lonely life
  Of sorrow here below;
Thy words of grace, with mercy rife,
  Make grateful praises flow!

Love, that on death's dark vale
  Its sweetest odours spread;
Where sin o'er all seemed to prevail,
  Redemption—glory shed.

And now we see Thee risen,
  Who once for us hast died,
Seated above the highest heaven,
  The Father's glorified.

Soon wilt Thou take Thy throne,
  Thy foes Thy footstool made,
And take us with Thee for Thine own,
  In glory—love display'd!

Jesus, we wait for Thee!
  With Thee to have our part:
What can full joy and blessing be
  But being where Thou art!

is a significant fact, acted on generally and admitted, that hymns of the late beloved J. N. D. express more accurately adequately than any others, the full position and privileges both he *individual saint* and the church of God, and especially our *wship with the* Father and His Son, and all it involves.—[ED.]

PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE PSALMS.

PSALM LXXIV.

For our present purpose I have only one remark to make. We find in it confidence in the faithfulness of God, when as to outward circumstances the power of the enemy seemed to make all hopeless.

The heart says, "Arise, O God, plead thine own cause." This is very blessed. So Moses continually, "*Thou* hast brought them out."

The world's enmity is really against the Lord in being against His people. Were they not His people, they would not trouble themselves much about them. God's people have to remember the same thing, and in their own weakness to remember what is in question.

PSALM LXXV.

Is the certainty and righteous government of Christ's kingdom. Only remark, faith gives thanks before it is set up, warning the presumptuous wicked, for God is the judge. Human pretension is no use against Him. Remark, too, that when Christ takes the kingdom, all is confusion, the earth and its pillars are dissolved.

LXXVI.

The general subject is still judgment executed *in connection* with Israel.

He saves all the meek of the earth.

Then comes another principle, applicable at all times by faith, and an encouraging and consoling principle. God makes the wrath of man to praise Him. He turns everything to His own glory and purpose, and then stops all the rest. Where faith is in exercise, it counts on God through all, sure that God will have the last and final word in the matter.

PSALM LXXVII.

The complaint goes farther, perhaps, than that of any Christian ought to go. Verse 7 for us would be simple unbelief; whereas for the Jew, whose people are cast off as regards all their privileges, the question justly arises as in Romans xi.; "I say then hath God cast away His people?"

But if we keep this in mind, there is much to instruct us as regards the time of deep trouble, as when the pressure of very adverse circumstances or even our own fault may have brought the soul into deep distress as to that which surrounds it.

The subject of this psalm is that he actually and actively sought the Lord. It was a direct appeal of the heart, not merely a wish nor submission. He went with his voice to God about it. This is more important than we are apt to suppose.

It is a strong picture of a thoroughly distressed soul: only fully realised when a soul, through the chastening hand of God, has lost the sense of divine favour; or does not yet know peace; but which in a certain degree of not looking to Him may be the case with any one.

But the soul turns to God. It has enjoyed mercy and songs in the night. Would the Lord cast off for ever? For the Christian this question has no place; but when the shield of faith is down, and the fiery darts of the wicked have reached the heart, a terrible and sore chastisement.

The only thing like it is when a soul has lightly received the gospel in its mercy (without, however, being insincere), and the work of conscience goes on afterwards. When, instead of communing with self and reasoning with its own misery, it looks to God, the heart sees all this is in itself, not in God. This is the turning point.

The Christian does not go back to former mercies (as the Jew would, and rightly would), because he always stands in present favour, even if Satan have got hold of his mind for a time, and he returns into the sunshine of it, when the cloud that arose out of his own mind is passed.

The Christian is never cast off. Hence he *has not* to remember, but enters again into the

enjoyment of divine favour which has never ceased.

In the rest of the psalm the Christian learns God's way in the sanctuary. Let His favour be ever so unchangeable, His WAY is always according to His own holiness, though for the very same reason according to His own faithful love.

On the whole, the psalm is the contrast between the working of the soul in restless anxiety in thus indulging its own thoughts, and turning, when it has recollected God, to cry to Himself. If the Christian apply it to interrupted favour he is all wrong. But he may learn, in respect to overwhelming sorrow, when the will is at work, that there is no rest till the soul remembers God, and cries to Him.

PSALM LXXVIII.

Although this psalm be evidently a recapitulation of the history of Israel, convicting them of their disobedience and unbelief, the uselessness as to their hearts of all God's dealings with them, and then, so magnificently, His turning to His own sovereign grace to bless, yet there are some marks of unbelief, and warning as to it which will be profitable to us to note.

The great principle of the psalm which I have noticed is itself of the highest interest. Sovereign grace is the only resource of God, if He is to bless man.

All dealings, however gracious, fail of their object. He loves His people, but He has no resource for blessing them but His own grace. If He acted on the effect of His dealings, He gives them up; they only turned aside like a deceitful bow. So ever.

But when all was at the worst, He awakes in His love to His people, because of their misery and His love to them. Then He accomplishes the purpose of His own grace in His own way. "He chose the tribe of Judah .... He chose Mount Zion, which He loved .... He chose David His servant."

Such is the general instruction of the psalm. But there are characters of unbelief which are instructive. The past mercy and faithfulness of God will not give courage for a present difficulty. God must be known by a present faith.

No reasoning from former mercies will give us confidence. "Can God furnish a table in the middle of the wilderness? .... He smote the rock .... can he give bread also?" Experience of goodness and power will not make man trust it, when some new need is there, or lust is at work. Nor was it better, though He commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of heaven, and rained down manna upon them. Nor did the correction of their lusts in the matter of the quails stop their unbelieving will.

When under His hand, man remembers Him. A little ease brings forgetfulness and self-will.

The moment I suppose anything cannot be for blessing, I limit God. This is a great sin—doubly, when we think of all He has done for us.

Experience ought to strengthen faith; but there must be present faith to use experience.

PSALM LXXIX.

Looks for judgment on the heathen. The only part I have to notice is the way, when brought very low, the heart turns to God. It does not even here avenge itself, but (the extreme of evil being come upon it) turns to God, and thus remembers its own sins. Nor has it any plea but God's own name. "Remember not against us former iniquities: let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us. . . . Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name! Deliver us, purge away our sins, for thy name's sake."

Such is the effect of chastisement. It supposes that we know God. It produces lowliness of heart, true confession, no pretension to any title of deliverance, but God's own goodness and name—what He is. Yet the soul rests on that.

He [God] having taken a people in the earth, has identified His glory with that people. *Faith feels this*, and reckons on deliverance *and grace.*

BRIEF THOUGHTS ON THE PHILIPPIANS.

CHAPTER I.

PAGES 548–565.

It is the epistle of christian experience, we do not get doctrinal teaching in it, but the experience of christian walk—not the experience of one who is going wrong, but of one who is going right, the experience which the Spirit of God gives.

Philippians gives us, not of course failure, but the path of the Christian, salvation being looked at throughout as at the end of the wilderness.

You say you are in Christ, then your acceptance is perfect ; if you are in Christ, Christ is in you ; then let me see Christ, and nothing else.

If you are dead, you cannot live on in sins. If you have got Christ, it is in His death you have got Him.

We have in this epistle the whole character of christian life ; this assumes that our place in Christ is settled. You cannot manifest Christ if you have not Christ.

The Christian is to manifest the life of Christ and nothing else. "Ye are [not ought to be] the epistle of Christ," and let Christ be read in *you as plainly* as the law in the tables of stone.

There must be positive dependence every moment; I learn that the whole thing for us is to get to absolute dependence on infallible faithfulness, on unwearied love, to carry us through. The heart is brought back to blessed dependence; the dependence is blessed, but the sense of that faithful love is unfailing joy and rest.

The question for you as Christians is, Are you walking in the light as God is in the light? God is light and love; His essential names. You are brought to God without a veil, and there is light on everything you do.

If heaven opens on Him, it opens on us; if God owns Him as Son, He owns us as sons.

Now we have to learn Christ. Has Christ had such a place in your hearts to-day that the things which spring from Christ spring from you?

We are "to be conformed to the image of His Son." This is the blessed hope of the Christian, and nothing short of it.

With him (Paul) it was labouring for Christ, or living with Christ.

We may get a blessed truth, as Peter did, revealed by the Father, a real revelation (I do not question that); but the flesh may not be broken down up to the measure of what we have been taught. Peter was doing Satan's

work, and Christ said to him, "Get thee behind me, Satan." Would not Christ have to call you Satan in something.

If we are not bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, our condition of soul is not up to the measure in which we have been taught.

Have you the true desire? Is there a locked up chamber in your heart? Christ will open it some day.

CHAPTER II.

The chapter before us shews us the spirit in which Christ walked down here, as the true character and spirit of the Christian, the meekness and gentleness of Christ.

In some Christians there is a certain degree of natural energy. When Moses killed the Egyptian, he had not forgotten the fleshly energy of Pharaoh's court. Flesh on God's side can never stand flesh on the devil's side. Moses had to be kept for forty years keeping sheep, that he might learn to be quiet. If one side of the christian character is wanting, the other side is always defective too. You never get one side by itself without even that being defective.

In this chapter you see the perfect, blessed giving up of self, and the most delicate consideration of others. Wherever true love is at *work*, you always reckon on the love of others.

Where there is not the positive power of Christ's presence, self will be there directly.

If I look at a brother, I see the blood of Christ upon him, I see the Spirit in him when I look on him with the eyes of Christ. Wherever the heart is feeling with Christ, one cannot but see good in others.

Paul always speaks first of the good amongst those to whom he writes. There is only one exception to this amongst the epistles. The Epistle to the Galatians is the exception; there he plunges right into the evil at once. Where doctrine and faith were touched, he was always a great deal more severe than when Christians were walking badly.

Suppose one Christian a powerful evangelist, another a teacher; the teacher will think, What a poor evangelist I am! The evangelist will feel, Oh! I only know the elements. He does see Christ in his brother. We are wretched creatures in ourselves.

You continually hear it said, What harm is there in music? What harm in painting? There is harm in not one of physical things, the harm is the use I make of them.

Take the divine side of love; and the worse the object, the greater is the love; but if you take the human side, the greater the object, the greater is the love. We find both in Christ.

If I get hold of the path, the spirit, the mind

of Jesus, nothing could be more hateful to me than anything of self.

Before God we never murmur, never dispute. If God were seen, there would not be one murmur, one disputation, and faith realises His presence.

"Ye are the epistle of Christ," filled up with mud it may be, and hard to read, but still ye are the epistle of Christ.

Is that kind of desire yours? not the desire of the sluggard who has nothing, who roasteth not that he took in hunting; but the real desire of manifesting Christ.

The apostle could say, "Delivered unto death for Jesus' sake." When we look back to a past life, we have more to be thankful for our trials than for anything else. Till the root is reached, the Lord does not let you go. The heart desires this—would not let the trial slip away.

There are three spaces in our hearts: Christ must be at the bottom of our hearts and at the top also; it is what is between the two that shews my state. Has your heart been open all day for the things of the world to trot over? Has the highway of your heart been open all day? May God give us to be anything or nothing, so that the Lord Jesus may be everything.

(To be continued.)

SUS, THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE.

(JOHN XI. 25.)

PAGES 147–156.

ıere are two ways in which the Lord Jesus
st has become the resurrection and life of
people: first, in purchasing their redemp-
from the wages of sin; and also in respect
.eir oneness with Him who is the very life
being.

He that believeth." It is, therefore, not
liar to all; and what a recognition of the
of a special resurrection this is—of the
se from death of all that shall believe in
s. That makes all the difference: "Be-
: I live, ye shall live also," alluding to
: who believe in Him.

ıey are the children of the resurrection,
ı blessing flows from their union with Jesus
ıe indwelling of the Spirit of life.

ère, then, we have the peculiar, the special
: of this difference. They are the children
od, therefore the children of the resurrec-
they stand in altogether another character
the children of this world.

Every knee shall certainly bow to Him; be they godly, or be they earthly, or be they the power of darkness, whether they be angels, or principalities, or powers, all shall acknowledge Him when He appears.

But the resurrection of which Christ speaks here is peculiar to His own, when He says, "I am the resurrection and the life." "I know," said Martha, "that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." But what comfort could that bring as regarded the bare fact of his rising, for so would the most ungodly sinner rise then?

But the blessedness is this, that where Christ is made the life of the soul, there is the certainty of a resurrection to life eternal in Christ's life: when the life of Jesus comes in, there is that within over which the power of Satan is unable to prevail.

We find, in the occurrence of this beautiful chapter, that it was during the bodily absence of the Lord from Lazarus that death had its power; so it is with us now. This family scene is a type of wonderful things to the church: in the absence of her Lord she feels the power of Satan and death—bodily death seizes on her members; but it shall not always be thus, for Christ shall visit His afflicted family, and when that occurs, His very presence *will* be the power of life.

Now, He may and does allow temptation, and permits the exhibition of the power of Satan in such; but even now He makes Himself known in spirit as stronger than Satan, quickening the soul and giving life to His people.

Sorrow, grief, and distress are here occasioned by Satan, particularly this character of sorrow, brought forward in the narrative before us.

The power of bodily death will not be manifested in all; for we are told that some shall be alive when the Lord comes: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up," &c. (1 Thess. iv. 15, 16.)

The presence of Christ naturally induces the absence of death; he that is dead when Christ comes shall be raised; and he that is alive shall be changed, thus unqualifiedly by His presence setting the power of death aside.

It is with this presence then that the believer has to do; it is for this he is looking. The child of God earnestly longs to enter into the perception of this power, which Christ has spent the travail of His soul to accomplish for him, in order that He may undo the very existence of Satan's power both in body and soul.

He has triumphed over the power of Satan

Everything in our hearts (I speak now of what we are naturally) is unlike God, as much unlike Him as sin is to holiness; and therefore we cannot admit Christ into our hearts any more than the Jews could abide Him in the world.

By nature we are nothing but sin. Man might consider us amiable, but everything that is not exactly like God He rejects and abhors. When He looks into our hearts what does He see? Everything, I say, that is the very opposite to Himself.

Can a revelation from Him, can anything which He approves, be received by us while in this state? No, everything within us must dislike it, and therefore I say, until God Himself imparts power to receive Christ, our hearts will still remain the hard beaten path trodden by the devil, who will always destroy the seed which is there sown. (See ver. 19.)

From this we learn that God alone can give the seed of the word root within us, which, as the power of God, Satan cannot destroy. Observe it was the true real seed that perishes after it was sown, not a false testimony, not something like it; which yet differs from it.

It is truth; God's testimony concerning Christ, that is received in the natural heart and mind; but unless God Himself give it root *there*, it lies scattered on the surface of the

ı, and is immediately caught away by n.

ere (in stony places) the seed is not im- :ately destroyed by Satan, it dureth for a ɜ. Natural feelings and dispositions give luence; but observe, it is nature still—that h is unlike God—which is entirely opposed im; and therefore the seed sown in such a t cannot take root and must wither away.

:ed on stony ground might have some ı, grow, and produce a flower, as beautiful ıy that has root. But let a searching sun nfavourable weather affect it, and it will wither. Thus can the natural man receive word by the exercise of his intellect, and his natural affections so influenced by it as while to resemble those in whom the seed ı divine root.

ıey rejoice in Christ; they profess to love , and are outwardly separated from the d; they present fruits so like God's plant- that, I say, to human observation there ars no difference between them, but they no root, and soon wither away.

ıe seed forthwith sprang up. Why? .use it had no deepness of earth, no solemn s, no serious sense of their past alienation God and present distance from fellowship Him.

ɔd can, and in some does, enable His

people to rejoice in Christ with exceeding great joy when they first see and receive Him. But these instances are few, and usually not followed by such good fruit as is seen in those who receive the word with strong affections of heart and mind at a sense of their past transgressions, the dissimilarity of their past lives to everything that was like God, and therefore to everything that He liked, and their present distance from that fellowship with God to which they are admitted through Christ.

All is well with such as receive the word with joy, but have no root, while they live at ease in the world, but when they are exposed to worldly loss and persecution for their profession of Christ, when trials and afflictions and the cross meet them in their path, they are offended.

We proceed to the third cause why the seed is unfruitful. "And some fell among thorns," &c. "And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in," &c. Observe, "the lusts of other things," not only the cares of the world, but "the lusts of other things" are equally effectual in destroying it.

What are these other things? "Other" is here contrasted with everything of which the word testifies; it signifies everything but "the word," all that is not "the word"—to be plainer, *all that* is not Christ.

No matter what it is, if the natural heart loves it, desires it, finds pleasure in it, it is a lust that chokes the seed. "All that is in the world," &c.

The Spirit reveals Christ, and forms Him in the heart, and therefore everything but Christ is among the lusts of the flesh.

I say that what the natural man calls his duties are among the lusts that choke the seed of the word, they proceed from nature, they serve and please it, a nature which is unlike God and Christ, and therefore what they must hate.

The Christian has lawful duties to perform, duties to parents and children, and other relations, and the Spirit of God will teach him to discover and fulfil them. These duties may then be called christian, for they proceed from Christ living in him, and are done in obedience to Him, and are the effects of His wisdom and power.

The seed falling into good ground, brings forth fruit, some an hundred-fold, some sixty, some thirty-fold.

The vivifying power of the Father is engaged, when the seed takes root in the heart. (Jas. i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 23.) It is the creating, vivifying power of God that provides a root in the heart of man, through which the seed abides there.

He ploughs up their hearts, to remove from them everything that prevents their fruitfulness; He suits the affliction to their particular need for it, that it might root out of their hearts the lusts of other things which tend to choke the seed.

Can you say you desire this by any means, by whatever means He is pleased to use?

I inquire not, Does nature love it? This cannot be, because the trial is sent to mortify and subdue nature, and therefore must be painful. (See Heb. xii.)

I say, I am not inquiring, Does nature love it? but I ask, Does faith approve it? does faith desire it? does the Spirit, who is opposed to all that opposes Christ, lead you to present your hearts unto God, that He might plough them up and purge them, ready and thankful for anything and everything by which He will prepare you to bring forth fruit one hundred-fold?

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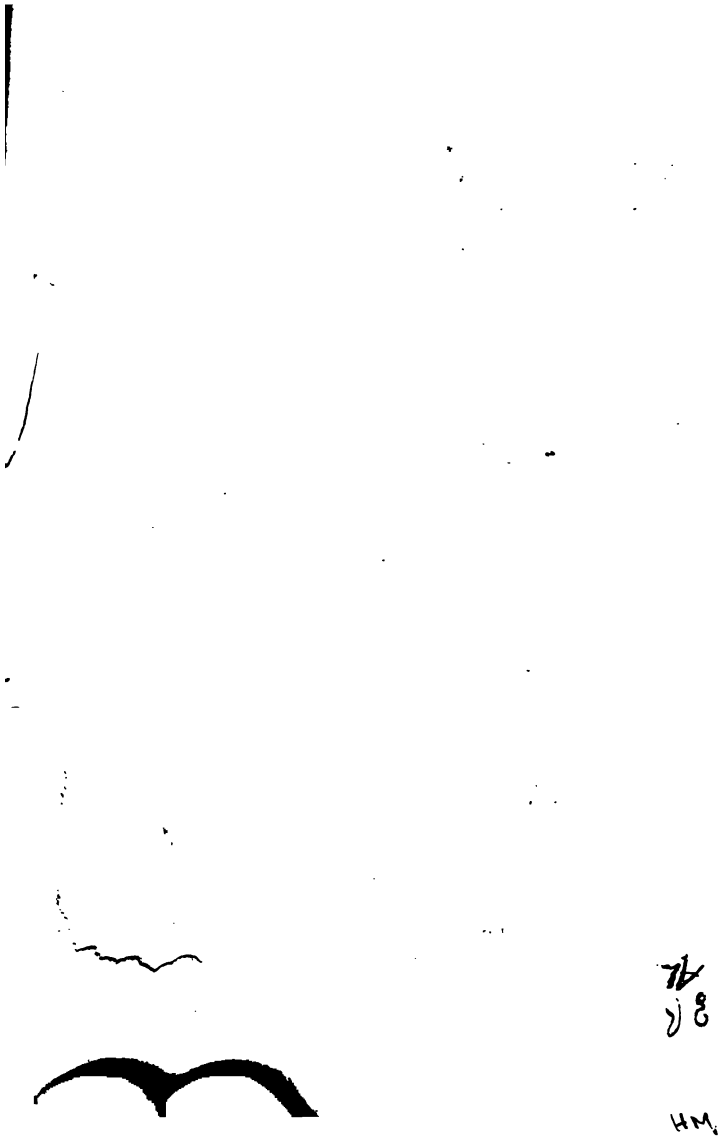
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